

ONE SHILLING. Cloth Gilt, 2s.

READINGS

FROM THE WORKS OF

CHARLES DICKENS.



CONDENSED AND ADAPTED BY
JOHN A. JENNINGS, B.A.

DUBLIN: CARSON BROTHERS, GRAFTON-ST.
LONDON: CIMPKIN, MARSHALL, & CO.; HAMILTON, ADAMS, & CO.

CHARLES DICKENS'S WORKS.

"THE CHARLES DICKENS EDITION."

21 vols., crown 8vo., £3 16s.

With Illustrations.

Vols. at 4s.

Pickwick Papers.
Martin Chuzzlewit.
Dombey and Son.
Nicholas Nickleby.

David Copperfield.
Bleak House.
Little Dorrit.
Our Mutual Friend.

Vols. at 3s. 6d.

Barnaby Rudge.
Old Curiosity Shop.
A Child's History of England.
Christmas Books.
Edwin Drood and other Stories
Sketches by Boz.

Christmas Stories from
"Household Words."
American Notes and Re-
printed Pieces.
Oliver Twist.
Great Expectations.

Vols. at 3s.

Tale of Two Cities.

| *Uncommercial Traveller.*

Hard Times and Pictures from Italy.

LIFE OF CHARLES DICKENS,

Uniform with this Edition, 2 vols., 7s.

CHARLES DICKENS'S WORKS. THE HOUSEHOLD EDITION.

Now Complete,

With Life by JOHN FORSTER; 22 vols., crown 4to, cloth, £4 8s. 6d.

Volumes, 5s., in Cloth.

Illustrations

Bleak House

61 by F. Barnard.

F. Barnard.

L. Fildes, E. G. Dalziel, F. Barnard.

F. Barnard.

F. Barnard.

J. Mahoney.

J. Mahoney.

F. Barnard.

‘Phiz.’

loth.

C. Green.

E. G. Dalziel.

F. Barnard.

loth.

A. B. Frost, Gordon, Thomson.

F. Barnard.

J. A. Fraser.

F. Barnard.

J. Mahoney.

F. Barnard.

E. G. Dalziel.

15 „ J. M. L. Ralston.

2s. 6d., in Cloth.

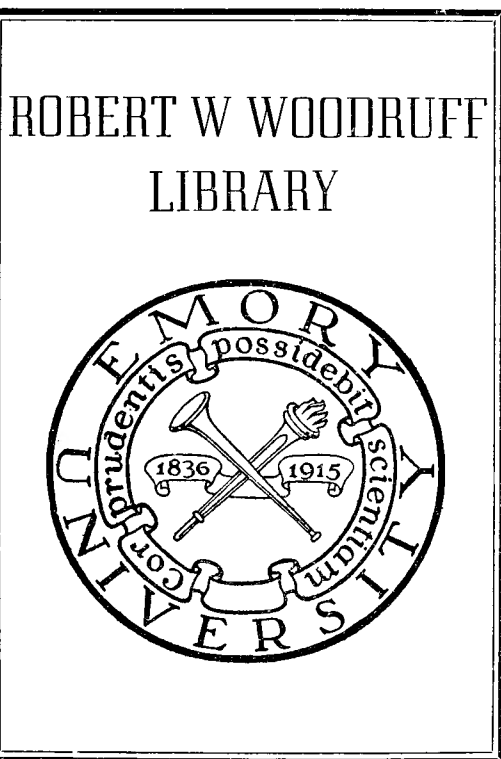
Hard Times

20 „ H. French.

5s. in Cloth.

THE LIFE OF CHARLES DICKENS.

By J. FORSTER. 40 Illustrations.



*Just Published. New Volume of Poems, 1s. 6d. handsomely bound in cloth,
gilt, and gilt edges.*

By J. A. JENNINGS, T.C.D., Editor of "The Modern Elocutionist,"

WAYSIDE RESTINGS.

There is the true touch of inspiration in these sonnets and verses, so pure and yet so simple, carrying now here, now there, memory's finger to some sense or feeling or aspiration, long since, it may be, forgotten, but softly awakened by the ripples which sweep the surface current of our emotions and fancies, recalling the events of bygone days. There is all through the verses that ring which wakes an echo in some far-off corner of our mental dwelling-house, for they have just the power of sympathy which, in times most blank and dreary, is felt and sighed for. The poet, young or old, who can stir the dry and dank heart-string to vibrate afresh, brightening to new effort, and touching with a new light each reader, carrying far below the shallower streams of thought some holier, happier influence, has not idly 'cast among the waste some scattered grain,' and so it is with these 'Restings.' We feel we love to tarry amidst the flowers of fancy which everywhere blossom throughout the pages of this little work, and know not which one to pluck, so pure and so sweet in sentiment is each. Nor in this culling can we single out any one as worthy more than another of special keeping, without leaving fairer untouched. There is in all such a depth of religious sentiment, and an under-current of devotional feeling, which enhances the value to minds unfettered by sordid passion, or clogged by the chain which the life of selfish worldliness forges round the imagination. We can recommend these ' Wayside Restings' as a charming little gift, and a most suitable visitor in the family circle or by the bedside of the invalid."—*The Cork Constitution*.

*Price 2s., by post, 2s. 4d., FIFTH EDITION, Illustrated, Enlarged,
and Revised, of*

PHILITIS.

BY CHARLES CASEY

Being a Condensed Account of the recently discovered Solution of
the Use and Meaning of

THE GREAT PYRAMID,

Whereby the mystery which has shrouded this wonderful structure for 4,000 years has been dissipated, and its claim to be accepted as a revelation of the highest ethical and scientific truths exhaustively demonstrated. Its irrefutable testimony to the Inspiration of the Scriptures, and solution of the problems relating to the earth and solar system are also set forth, and its prophetic character exhibited.

"This remarkable pamphlet gives in its prose introduction a condensed statement of the question now causing so much interest in the scientific world, as to the original use and meaning of the Great Pyramid of Cheops, and holds, seemingly, to the views entertained by Taylor, Smyth, Day, and other scientists, who believe they have demonstrated that this remarkable structure had a strictly scientific use and meaning, and was not merely the tomb of a king, the various facts claimed being detailed by the author. The startling revelations regarded as proved—of a cosmic and prophetic character—are of such a nature as to cause a deep interest in the merits of the question."—*Irish Times*.

7 GRAFTON STREET.

All Orders must be accompanied by a Cash Remittance.

R E A D I N G S

FROM THE

WORKS OF CHARLES DICKENS.

READINGS

FROM THE

WORKS OF CHARLES DICKENS.

CONDENSED AND ADAPTED BY

JOHN A. JENNINGS, B.A.,

Author of "Wayside Restings," and Editor of "The Modern Elocutionist."

DUBLIN:


CARSON BROTHERS, 7, GRAFTON-STREET

LONDON: SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, & CO.;

HAMILTON, ADAMS, & CO.

All rights reserved.

PREFACE.



THE present little volume aims at supplying a long-felt want—namely, a suitable selection of Readings from the works of CHARLES DICKENS.

During his lifetime Mr. Dickens attracted immense audiences in America, as well as in Great Britain and Ireland, to hear him render passages from his own books.

There is scarcely any author whose writings prove so rich a mine from whence materials may be drawn for this purpose. Readings are, perhaps, the most popular form of entertainment that we possess, as they are certainly one of the most healthy and intellectual. Difficulties are frequently experienced in choosing passages suitable for platform delivery; and the object of the following pages is to render such a task unnecessary.

In the United States the great novelist himself published some few—certainly not a dozen—of his Readings, but in these countries there has been no systematic attempt at anything of the kind. The endeavour is now made—with what degree of success the reader will determine.

The Readings are not mere excerpts from the novels, but consist of condensations and adaptations, thus

bringing many passages into connexion, and, for the most part, giving a complete story in a single selection. Great care has been taken in this process, and, except where the insertion of some few words of an explanatory nature is absolutely necessary to the sense, the entire of the language is Mr. Dickens' own. In almost every instance the contents have been submitted to the test of a general audience's approval, so that it is believed that nothing has been included which will not prove highly acceptable to any class of hearers.

The Editor takes this opportunity of tendering his sincerest thanks to Messrs. Chapman and Hall, by whose most kind permission not a few of the following copyright pages are inserted.

He is encouraged by the marked success of his former book—"The Modern Elocutionist"—to hope for a similar result in the present instance. He is sure that there are faults in the performance of his task, but he also asks his readers to believe that he has done his utmost to make the selection characteristically representative of the celebrated author whose name the title-page bears.

MIDSUMMER, 1882.

CONTENTS.



	Page
A Christmas Carol—Stave I., - - -	9
„ „ Stave II., - - -	15
„ „ Stave III., - - -	20
„ „ Stave IV., - - -	28
The Parlour Orator, - - -	37
Mrs. Corney makes Tea, - - -	40
A Contrast not uncommon, - - -	45
Copperfield and the Waiter, - - -	48
Mr. Leo Hunter calls, - - -	52
The Eatanswill Election, - - -	57
Horatio Sparkins, - - -	65
The Four Sisters, - - -	73
Richard Doubledick—Part I., - - -	77
„ „ Part II., - - -	82
Our Next-door Neighbour. - - -	88
Do-the-Boys Hall—Part I., - - -	93
„ „ Part II., - - -	94
„ „ Part III., - - -	100
The Stroller's Tale, - - -	102
The Art of Proposing, - - -	106
Doctor Marigold—Part I., - - -	108
„ „ Part II., - - -	114
„ „ Part III., - - -	119
Mrs. Nickleby receives a Proposal, - - -	124
Boots at the Holly-tree Inn, - - -	130
The Death of Jo, - - -	139
The Tuggses at Ramsgate, - - -	143

	Page
Shooting Experiences, - - - -	- 150
Skating Experiences, - - - -	- 156
Little Em'ly—Part I., - - - -	- 161
„ Part II., - - - -	- 166
„ Part III., - - - -	- 170
Gabriel Grub, - - - -	- 175
The Duties of a Secretary, - - - -	- 180
Bob Sawyer's Party, - - - -	- 184
The Convict's Return, - - - -	- 193
The Dancing Academy, - - - -	- 197
The Rival Editors, - - - -	- 202
The Drunkard's Death, - - - -	- 209
Mrs. Joseph Porter, - - - -	- 215
The Death of Little Nell, - - - -	- 223
Sentiment, - - - -	- 229
Bardell <i>against</i> Pickwick, - - - -	- 236
The Bloomsbury Christening, - - - -	- 248
The Children, - - - -	- 254

READINGS FROM CHARLES DICKENS.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

IN PROSE.

Being a Ghost Story of Christmas, in Four Staves.

(Condensed.)

STAVE ONE.

MARLEY'S GHOST.

MARLEY was dead, to begin with. There is no doubt whatever about that. The register of his burial was signed by the clergyman, the clerk, the undertaker, and the chief mourner. Scrooge signed it. And Scrooge's name was good upon 'Change, for anything he chose to put his hand to.

Old Marley was as dead as a door-nail.

Scrooge knew he was dead? Of course he did. How could it be otherwise? Scrooge and he were partners for I don't know how many years. Scrooge was his sole executor, his sole administrator, his sole assign, his sole residuary legatee, his sole friend, and sole mourner.

Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge! a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous, old sinner! External heat and cold had little influence on him. The heaviest rain, and snow, and hail, and sleet, could boast of the advantage over him in only one respect. They often "came down" handsomely, and Scrooge never did.

Once upon a time—of all the good days in the year, on Christmas Eve—old Scrooge sat busy in his counting-house. It was cold, bleak, biting weather: the city clocks had only just gone three, but it was quite dark already. The door of Scrooge's counting-house was open, that he might keep his eye upon his

clerk, who in a dismal little cell beyond, a sort of tank, was copying letters. Scrooge had a very small fire, but the clerk's fire was so very much smaller that it looked like one coal. Wherefore the clerk put on his white comforter, and tried to warm himself at the candle; in which effort, not being a man of strong imagination, he failed.

"A merry Christmas, uncle! God save you!" cried a cheerful voice. It was the voice of Scrooge's nephew, who came upon him so quickly that this was the first intimation he had of his approach.

"Bah!" said Scrooge, "Humbug!"

"Christmas a humbug, uncle!" said Scrooge's nephew. "You don't mean that, I am sure?"

"I do," said Scrooge. "Out upon merry Christmas! What's Christmas time to you but a time for paying bills without money; a time for finding yourself a year older, and not an hour richer; a time for balancing your books and having every item in 'em through a round dozen of months presented dead against you? If I could work my will, every idiot who goes about with 'Merry Christmas,' on his lips, should be boiled with his own pudding, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart. He should!"

"Uncle!" pleaded the nephew.

"Nephew! keep Christmas in your own way, and let me keep it in mine."

"Keep it! But you don't keep it."

"Let me leave it alone, then. Much good may it do you! Much good it has ever done you!"

"There are many things from which I might have derived good, by which I have not profited, I dare say, Christmas among the rest. But I am sure I have always thought of Christmas time, when it has come round—apart from the veneration due to its sacred name and origin, if anything belonging to it can be apart from that—as a good time; a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time; the only time I know of, in the long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they really were fellow-passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys. And therefore, uncle, though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe that it *has* done me good, and *will* do me good; and I say, God bless it!"

The clerk in the tank involuntarily applauded.

"Let me hear another sound from *you*," said Scrooge, "and you'll keep your Christmas by losing your situation! You're quite a powerful speaker, sir," he added, turning to his nephew. "I wonder you don't go into Parliament."

"Don't be angry, uncle. Come! dine with us to-morrow."

Scrooge said that he would see him—yes, indeed he did. He went the whole length of the expression, and said that he would see him in that extremity first.

"But why?" cried Scrooge's nephew. "Why?"

"Why did you get married?" said Scrooge.

"Because I fell in love."

"Because you fell in love!" growled Scrooge, as if that were the only one thing in the world more ridiculous than a merry Christmas. "Good afternoon!"

"Nay, uncle, but you never came to see me before that happened. Why give it as a reason for not coming now?"

"Good afternoon."

"I want nothing from you; I ask nothing of you; why cannot we be friends?"

"Good afternoon."

"I am sorry, with all my heart, to find you so resolute. We have never had any quarrel, to which I have been a party. But I have made the trial in homage to Christmas, and I'll keep my Christmas humour to the last. So A Merry Christmas, uncle!"

"Good afternoon!"

"And A Happy New Year!"

"Good afternoon!"

His nephew left the room without an angry word, notwithstanding.

At length the hour of shutting up the counting-house arrived.

"You'll want all day to-morrow, I suppose?" said Scrooge, to the expectant clerk.

"If quite convenient, sir."

"It's not convenient, and it's not fair. If I was to stop half-a-crown for it, you'd think yourself ill-used, I'll be bound? And yet, you don't think *me* ill-used, when I pay a day's wages for no work."

The clerk observed that it was only once a year.

"A poor excuse for picking a man's pocket every twenty-fifth of December! But I suppose you must have the whole day. Be here all the earlier next morning."

The clerk promised that he would; and Scrooge walked out with a growl. The office was closed in a twinkling, and the clerk, with the long ends of his white comforter dangling below his waist (for he boasted no great coat), went down a slide at the end of a lane of boys, twenty times, in honour of its being Christmas Eve, and then ran home as hard as he could pelt, to play at blindman's buff.

Scrooge took his melancholy dinner in his usual melancholy tavern; and having read all the newspapers, and beguiled the rest of the evening with his banker's-book, went home to bed.

Now, it is a fact, that there was nothing at all particular about the knocker on his door, except that it was very large, and yet Scrooge, having his key in the lock of the door, saw in the knocker, without its undergoing any intermediate process of change—not a knocker, but Marley's face!

Marley's face—a dismal light about it, like a bad lobster in a dark cellar. It was not angry or ferocious, but looked at Scrooge as Marley used to look: with ghostly spectacles turned up on its ghostly forehead. As Scrooge looked fixedly at this phenomenon, it was a knocker again. He put his hand upon the key he had relinquished, turned it sturdily, and walked in. Up he went, not caring a button for its being dark. Darkness is cheap, and Scrooge liked it. But before he shut his heavy door, he walked through his rooms to see that all was right. He had just enough recollection of the face to desire to do that. Sitting-room, bed-room, lumber-room. All as they should be. Quite satisfied, he closed his door, and locked himself in; double-locked himself in, which was not his custom. He sat down. As he threw his head back in the chair, his glance happened to rest upon a bell, a disused bell, that hung in the room, and communicated for some purpose now forgotten with a chamber in the highest story of the building. It was with great astonishment, and with a strange, inexplicable dread, that, as he looked, he saw this bell begin to swing; soon it rang out loudly, and so did every bell in the house. They ceased as they had begun, together, and were succeeded by a clanking noise, deep down below, as if some person were dragging a heavy chain over the casks in the wine-merchant's cellar. Then he heard the noise

much louder, on the floors below ; then coming up the stairs ; then coming straight towards his door. Upon its coming in, the dying flame leaped up, as though it cried " I know him ! Marley's ghost ! " and fell again.

The same face: the very same. Marley in his pigtail, usual waistcoat, tights, and boots. His body was transparent ; so that Scrooge, observing him, and looking through his waistcoat, could see the two buttons on his coat behind.

" How now ! " said Scrooge, caustic and cold as ever. " What do you want with me ? "

" Much ! "—Marley's voice, no doubt about it.

" Who are you ? "

" Ask me who I *was*."

" Who *were* you then ? "

" In life I was your partner, Jacob Marley."

" Can you—can you sit down ? "

" I can."

" Do it, then."

The ghost sat down on the opposite side of the fireplace, as if he were quite used to it.

" You don't believe in me," observed the Ghost.

" I don't," said Scrooge.

" What evidence would you have of my reality beyond that of your senses ? "

" I don't know."

" Why do you doubt your senses ? "

" Because a little thing affects them. A slight disorder of the stomach makes them cheats. You may be an undigested bit of beef, a blot of mustard, a crumb of cheese, a fragment of an underdone potatoe. There's more of gravy than of grave about you, whatever you are ! "

How great was Scrooge's horror when the phantom, taking off a bandage round his head, as if it were too warm to wear indoors, its lower jaw dropped down upon its breast ! He fell upon his knees, and clasped his hands upon his face.

" Mercy ! Dreadful apparition, why do you trouble me ? Why do spirits walk the earth, and why do they come to me ? "

" It is required of every man," the Ghost returned, " that the spirit within him should walk abroad among his fellow-men, and travel far and wide ; and if that spirit goes not forth in life, it is

condemned to do so after death. It is doomed to wander through the world—oh, woe is me!—and witness what it cannot share, but might have shared on earth, and turned to happiness! I cannot rest, I cannot stay, I cannot linger anywhere. My spirit never walked beyond our counting-house—mark me!—in life my spirit never roved beyond the narrow limits of our money-changing hole; and weary journeys lie before me!”

“Seven years dead. And travelling all the time? You travel fast?”

“On the wings of the wind.”

“You might have got over a great quantity of ground in seven years.”

“Oh! captive, bound, and double-ironed, not to know that ages of incessant labour, by immortal creatures, for this earth must pass into eternity before the good of which it is susceptible is all developed. Not to know that any Christian spirit working kindly in its little sphere, whatever it may be, will find its mortal life too short for its vast means of usefulness. Not to know that no space of regret can make amends for one life’s opportunities misused! Yet such was I! Oh! such was I!”

“But you were always a good man of business,” Jacob, faltered Scrooge, who now began to apply this to himself.

“Business!” cried the Ghost, wringing its hands. “Mankind was my business. The common welfare was my business; charity, mercy, forbearance, and benevolence, were all my business. The dealings of my trade were but a drop of water in the comprehensive ocean of my business! At this time of the rolling year I suffer most. Why did I walk through crowds of fellow-beings with my eyes turned down, and never raise them to that blessed Star which led the Wise Men to a poor abode! Were there no poor homes to which its light would have conducted *me*!”

Scrooge was very much dismayed to hear the spectre going on at this rate, and began to quake exceedingly.

“Hear me!” cried the Ghost. “My time is nearly gone.”

“I will. But don’t be hard upon me! Don’t be flowery, Jacob, pray!”

“I am here to-night to warn you, that you have yet a chance and hope of escaping my fate. A chance and hope of my procuring, Ebenezer.”

“You were always a good friend to me. Thank’ee!”

“You will be haunted by Three Spirits.”

“Is that the chance and hope you mentioned, Jacob? If it is, I—I think I’d rather not.”

“Without their visits,” said the Ghost, “you cannot hope to shun the path I tread. Expect the first to-morrow, when the bell tolls One. Expect the second on the next night at the same hour. The third, upon the next night when the last stroke of Twelve has ceased to vibrate. Look to see me no more; and look that, for your own sake, you remember what has passed between us!”

The apparition walked backward from him; and at every step it took, the window raised itself a little, so that when the spectre reached it, it was wide open. Then Marley’s Ghost floated out upon the bleak, dark night.

Scrooge closed the window, and examined the door by which the Ghost had entered. It was double-locked, as he had locked it with his own hands, and the bolts were undisturbed. He tried to say “Humbug!” but stopped at the first syllable. And being, from the emotion he had undergone, or the fatigues of the day, or his glimpse of the Invisible World, or the dull conversation of the Ghost, or the lateness of the hour, much in need of repose, went straight to bed, without undressing, and fell asleep upon the instant.

STAVE TWO.

THE FIRST OF THE THREE SPIRITS.

WHEN Scrooge awoke, it was so dark, that, looking out of bed, he could scarcely distinguish the transparent window from the opaque walls of his chamber.

The bell sounded, a deep, dull, hollow, melancholy ONE. Light flashed up in the room upon the instant, and the curtains of his bed were drawn aside by a strange figure—like a child: yet not so like a child as an old man, viewed through some supernatural medium. Its hair, which hung about its neck and down its back, was white as if with age; and yet the face had not a wrinkle in it, and the tenderest bloom was on the skin. It held a branch of fresh green holly in its hand; and, in singular contradiction of that wintry emblem, had its dress trimmed with summer flowers. But the strangest thing about it was, that from the crown of its

head there sprung a bright clear jet of light, by which all this was visible; and which was doubtless the occasion of its using, in its duller moments, a great extinguisher for a cap, which it now held under its arm.

"Are you the Spirit, sir, whose coming was foretold to me?" asked Scrooge.

"I am!"

"Who, and what are you?" Scrooge demanded.

"I am the Ghost of Christmas Past."

"Long past?"

"No. Your past."

Scrooge then made bold to inquire what business brought him there.

"Your welfare!" said the Ghost. "Rise! and walk with me!"

The grasp, though gentle as a woman's hand, was not to be resisted. He rose: but finding that the Spirit made towards the window, clasped its robe in supplication.

"I am a mortal, and liable to fall."

"Bear but a touch of my hand *there*," said the Spirit, laying it upon his heart, "and you shall be upheld in more than this!"

As the words were spoken, they passed through the wall, and at once they were in the busy thoroughfares of a city, where shadowy passengers passed and re-passed; where shadowy carts and coaches battled for their way, and all the strife and tumult of a real city were. It was made plain enough, by the dressing of the shops, that it was Christmas time; it was evening and the streets were lighted up. The Ghost stopped at a certain warehouse door, and asked Scrooge if he knew it.

"Know it! Was I apprenticed here!"

They went in. At sight of an old gentleman in a Welsh wig, sitting behind such a high desk that if he had been two inches taller he must have knocked his head against the ceiling, Scrooge cried in great excitement:

"Why, it's old Fezziwig! Bless his heart; it's Fezziwig alive again!"

Old Fezziwig laid down his pen, and looked up at the clock, which pointed to the hour of seven. He rubbed his hands; adjusted his capacious waistcoat; laughed all over himself, from his shoes to his organ of benevolence; and called out in a comfortable, oily, rich, fat, jovial voice:—"Yo ho, there! Ebenezer! Dick!"

Scrooge's former self, now grown a young man, came briskly in, accompanied by his fellow-'prentice.

"Dick Wilkins, to be sure!" said Scrooge to the Ghost. "Yes, yes. There he is. He was very much attached to me, was Dick. Poor Dick! Dear, dear!"

"Yo ho, my boys!" said Fezziwig. "No more work to-night. Christmas Eve, Dick. Christmas, Ebenezer! Let's have the shutters up before a man can say Jack Robinson! Clear away, my lads, and let's have lots of room here! Hilli-ho, Dick! Chirrup, Ebenezer!"

Clear away! There was nothing they wouldn't have cleared away, or couldn't have cleared away, with old Fezziwig looking on. It was done in a minute. In came a fiddler with a music-book, and went up to the lofty desk, and made an orchestra of it. In came Mrs. Fezziwig, one vast substantial smile. In came the three Miss Fezziwigs, beaming and lovable. In came the six young followers whose hearts they broke. In came all the young men and women employed in the business. In came the housemaid, with her cousin the baker. In came the cook, with her brother's particular friend, the milkman. In they all came, one after another; some shyly, some boldly, some gracefully, some awkwardly, some pushing, some pulling—in they all came, anyhow and everyhow. Away they all went, twenty couple at once.

Then there were more dances, and there were forfeits, and more dances, and there was cake, and there was negus, and there was a great piece of Cold Roast, and there was a great piece of Cold Boiled, and there were mince-pies, and plenty of beer. But the great effect of the evening came after the Roast and Boiled, when the fiddler struck up "Sir Roger de Coverley." Then old Fezziwig stood out to dance with Mrs. Fezziwig. Top couple, too, with a good stiff piece of work cut out for them; three or four and twenty pair of partners; people who were not to be trifled with; people who *would* dance, and had no notion of walking. But if they had been twice as many—ah, four times—old Fezziwig would have been a match for them, and so would Mrs. Fezziwig. As to *her*, she was worthy to be his partner in every sense of the term. A positive light appeared to issue from Fezziwig's calves. They shone in every part of the dance like moons. You couldn't have predicted, at any given time, what would become of them next. And when old Fezziwig and Mrs. Fezziwig had gone all through

the dance; advance and retire, both hands to your partner, bow and curtsy, corkscrew, thread-the-needle, and back again to your place; Fezziwig "cut"—cut so deftly that he appeared to wink with his legs, and came upon his feet again without a stagger.

When the clock struck eleven, this domestic ball broke up. Mr. and Mrs. Fezziwig took their stations, one on either side of the door, and shaking hands with every person individually as he or she went out, wished him or her a Merry Christmas. When everybody had retired but the two 'prentices, they did the same to them; and thus the cheerful voices died away, and the lads were left to their beds; which were under a counter in the back-shop.

"A small matter," said the Ghost to Scrooge, "to make these silly folks so full of gratitude. He has spent but a few pounds of your mortal money: three or four, perhaps. Is that so much that he deserves this praise?"

"It isn't that," said Scrooge, heated by the remark, and speaking unconsciously like his former, not his latter self. "It isn't that, Spirit. He has the power to render us happy or unhappy; to make our service light or burdensome; a pleasure or a toil. Say that his power lies in words and looks; in things so slight and insignificant that it is impossible to add and count 'em up: what then? The happiness he gives is quite as great as if it cost a fortune."

He felt the Spirit's glance, and stopped.

"What is the matter?" asked the Ghost.

"Nothing particular."

"Something, I think?"

"No, no. I should like to be able to say a word or two to my clerk just now. That's all."

His former self turned down the lamps as he gave utterance to the wish; and Scrooge and the Ghost again stood side by side in the open air.

"My time grows short," observed the Spirit. "Quick!"

Again Scrooge saw himself. He was older now; a man in the prime of life.

He was not alone, but sat by the side of a fair young girl in a mourning-dress, in whose eyes there were tears, which sparkled in the light that shone out of the Ghost of Christmas Past.

"It matters little," she said, softly. "To you, very little. Another idol has displaced me; and if it can cheer and comfort you

in time to come, as I would have tried to do, I have no just cause to grieve."

"What idol has displaced you?" he rejoined.

"A golden one. You fear the world too much. All your other hopes have merged into the hope of being beyond the chance of its sordid reproach. I have seen your nobler aspirations fall off one by one, until the master-passion, Gain, engrosses you. Have I not?"

"What then?" he retorted. "Even if I have grown so much wiser, what then? I am not changed towards you. Have I ever sought release?"

"In words! No. Never."

"In what, then?"

"In a changed nature; in an altered spirit; in another atmosphere of life; another Hope as its great end. In everything that made my love of any worth or value in your sight. But if you were free to-day, to-morrow, yesterday, can even I believe that you would choose a dowerless girl—you who, in your very confidence with her, weigh everything by Gain: or, choosing her, if for a moment you were false enough to your one guiding principle to do so, do I not know that your repentance and regret would surely follow? I do; and I release you. With a full heart, for the love of him you once were."

He was about to speak; but with her head turned from him, she resumed.

"You may—the memory of what is past half makes me hope you will—have pain in this. A very, very brief time, and you will dismiss the recollection of it, gladly, as an unprofitable dream, from which it happened well that you awoke. May you be happy in the life you have chosen!"

She left him, and they parted.

"Spirit!" said Scrooge, in a broken voice, "remove me from this place."

"I told you these were shadows of the things that have been," said the Ghost. "That they are what they are, do not blame me!"

"Remove me!" Scrooge exclaimed. "I cannot bear it! Leave me! Take me back. Haunt me no longer!"

Scrooge was conscious of being exhausted, and overcome by an irresistible drowsiness; and, further, of being in his own bed-room. He had barely time to reel to bed, before he sank into a heavy sleep.

STAVE THREE.

THE SECOND OF THE THREE SPIRITS.

SCROOGE awoke in the middle of a prodigiously tough snore, and sat up in bed to get his thoughts together. Seeing a light in the adjoining apartment, he peeped in at the door. It was his own room. There was no doubt about that. But it had undergone a surprising transformation. The walls and ceiling were so hung with living green, that it looked a perfect grove. Heaped up on the floor, to form a kind of throne, were turkeys, geese, game, poultry, brawn, great joints of meat, sucking-pigs, long wreaths of sausages, mince-pies, and plum-puddings. In easy state upon this couch there sat a jolly Giant, glorious to see; who bore a glowing torch, in shape not unlike Plenty's horn, and held it up, high up, to shed its light on Scrooge, as he came peeping round the door.

"Come in!" exclaimed the Ghost. "Come in! and know me better, man!"

Scrooge entered timidly.

"I am the Ghost of Christmas Present. Look upon me! You have never seen the like of me before!"

"Never."

"Have never walked forth with the younger members of my family; meaning (for I am very young) my elder brothers born in these later years?"

"I don't think I have. I am afraid I have not. Have you had many brothers, Spirit?"

"More than eighteen hundred."

"A tremendous family to provide for."

The Ghost of Christmas Present rose.

"Spirit, conduct me where you will. I went forth last night on compulsion, and I learnt a lesson which is working now. To-night, if you have aught to teach me, let me profit by it."

"Touch my robe!"

Scrooge did as he was told, and held it fast.

The Ghost led him straight to Scrooge's clerk's; and on the threshold of the door the Spirit smiled, and stopped to bless Bob Cratchit's dwelling with the sprinklings of his torch. Think of that! Bob had but fifteen "Bob" a-week himself; he pocketed

on Saturdays but fifteen copies of his Christian name; and yet the Ghost of Christmas Present blessed his four-roomed house!

Then up rose Mrs. Cratchit, Cratchit's wife, dressed out but poorly in a twice-turned gown, but brave in ribbons, which are cheap and make a goodly show for sixpence; and she laid the cloth, assisted by Belinda Cratchit, second of her daughters, also brave in ribbons; while Master Peter Cratchit plunged a fork into the saucepan of potatoes, and getting the corners of his monstrous shirt-collar (Bob's private property, conferred upon his son and heir in honour of the day) into his mouth, rejoiced to find himself so gallantly attired, and yearned to show his linen in the fashionable Parks. And now two smaller Cratchits, boy and girl, came tearing in, screaming that outside the baker's they had smelt the goose, and known it for their own.

"What has ever got your precious father then?" said Mrs. Cratchit. "And your brother, Tiny Tim! And Martha warn't as late last Christmas Day by half-an-hour!"

"Here's Martha, mother!" said a girl, appearing as she spoke.

"Here's Martha, mother!" cried the two young Cratchits.

"Hurrah! There's *such* a goose, Martha!"

"Why bless your heart alive, my dear, how late you are!" said Mrs. Cratchit, kissing her a dozen times.

"We'd a deal of work to finish up last night, and had to clear away this morning, mother!"

"Well! Never mind so long as you are come. Sit ye down before the fire, my dear, and have a warm, Lord bless ye!"

"No, no! There's father coming," cried the two young Cratchits, who were everywhere at once. "Hide, Martha, hide."

So Martha hid herself, and in came little Bob, the father, with at least three feet of comforter, exclusive of the fringe, hanging down before him; and his threadbare clothes darned up and brushed, to look seasonable; and Tiny Tim upon his shoulder. Alas for Tiny Tim, he bore a little crutch, and had his limbs supported by an iron frame!

"Why, where's our Martha?" cried Bob Cratchit, looking round.

"Not coming," said Mrs. Cratchit.

"Not coming!" said Bob. "Not coming upon Christmas Day!"

Martha didn't like to see him disappointed, if it were only in joke; so she came out prematurely from behind the closet door, and ran into his arms, while the two young Cratchits hustled Tiny

Tim, and bore him off into the wash-house, that he might hear the pudding singing in the copper.

"And how did little Tim behave?" asked Mrs. Cratchit.

"As good as gold," said Bob, "and better. Somehow he gets thoughtful, sitting by himself so much, and thinks the strangest things you ever heard. He told me, coming home, that he hoped the people saw him in the church, because he was a cripple, and it might be pleasant to them to remember, upon Christmas Day, who made lame beggars walk and blind men see."

Bob's voice was tremulous when he told them this, and trembled more when he said that Tiny Tim was growing strong and hearty.

His active little crutch was heard upon the floor, and back came Tiny Tim before another word was spoken, escorted by his brother and sister to his stool beside the fire.

Mrs. Cratchit made the gravy (ready beforehand in a little saucepan) hissing hot; Master Peter mashed the potatoes with incredible vigour; Miss Belinda sweetened up the apple-sauce; Martha dusted the hot plates; Bob took Tiny Tim beside him in a tiny corner at the table; the two young Cratchits set chairs for everybody, not forgetting themselves, and mounting guard upon their post, crammed spoons into their mouths, lest they should shriek for goose before their turn came to be helped. At last the dishes were set on, and grace was said. It was succeeded by a breathless pause, as Mrs. Cratchit, looking slowly all along the carving-knife, prepared to plunge it in the breast; but when she did, and when the long-expected gush of stuffing issued forth, one murmur of delight arose all round the board, and even Tiny Tim, excited by the two young Cratchits, beat on the table with the handle of his knife, and feebly cried Hurrah!

There never was such a goose. Bob said he didn't believe there ever was such a goose cooked. Its tenderness and flavour, size and cheapness, were the themes of universal admiration. Eked out by apple-sauce and mashed potatoes, it was a sufficient dinner for the whole family; indeed, as Mrs. Cratchit said with great delight (surveying one small atom of a bone upon the dish), they hadn't ate it all at last! Yet everyone had had enough, and the youngest Cratchits, in particular, were steeped in sage and onion to the eyebrows! But now, the plates being changed by Miss Belinda, Mrs. Cratchit left the room alone—too nervous to bear witnesses—to take the pudding up, and bring it in.

Suppose it should not be done enough! Suppose it should break in turning out! Suppose somebody should have got over the wall of the backyard, and stolen it, while they were merry with the goose—a supposition at which the two young Cratchits became livid! All sorts of horrors were supposed.

Hallo! A great deal of steam! The pudding was out of the copper. A smell like a washing-day! That was the cloth. A smell like an eating-house and a pastrycook's next door to each other, with a laundress's next door to that! That was the pudding! In half a minute Mrs. Cratchit entered—flushed, but smiling proudly—with the pudding, like a speckled cannon-ball, so hard and firm, blazing in half of half-a-quartern of ignited brandy, and bedight with Christmas holly stuck into the top.

Oh, a wonderful pudding! Bob Cratchit said, and calmly too, that he regarded it as the greatest success achieved by Mrs. Cratchit since their marriage. Mrs. Cratchit said that, now the weight was off her mind, she would confess she had her doubts about the quantity of flour. Everybody had something to say about it, but nobody said or thought it was at all a small pudding for a large family. It would have been flat heresy to do so. Any Cratchit would have blushed to hint at such a thing.

At last the dinner was all done, the cloth was cleared, the hearth swept, and the fire made up. The compound in the jug being tasted, and considered perfect, apples and oranges were put upon the table, and a shovel full of chestnuts on the fire. Then all the Cratchit family drew round the hearth, in what Bob Cratchit called a circle.

Then Bob proposed:

“A Merry Christmas to us all, my dears. God bless us!”

Which all the family re-echoed.

“God bless us every one!” said Tiny Tim, the last of all.

He sat very close to his father's side, upon his little stool. Bob held his withered little hand in his, as if he loved the child, and wished to keep him by his side, and dreaded that he might be taken from him.

“Mr. Scrooge!” said Bob; “I'll give you Mr. Scrooge, the Founder of the Feast!”

“The Founder of the Feast indeed!” cried Mrs. Cratchit, reddening. “I wish I had him here. I'd give him a piece of my mind to feast upon, and I hope he'd have a good appetite for it.”

"My dear," said Bob, "the children! Christmas Day."

"It should be Christmas Day, I am sure," said she, "on which one drinks the health of such an odious, stingy, hard, unfeeling man as Mr. Scrooge. You know he is, Robert! Nobody knows it better than you do, poor fellow!"

"My dear," was Bob's mild answer. "Christmas Day."

"I'll drink his health for your sake and the Day's," said Mrs. Cratchit, "not for his. Long life to him! A merry Christmas and a happy new year! He'll be very merry and very happy, I have no doubt!"

The children drank the toast after her. It was the first of their proceedings which had no heartiness in it. Tiny Tim drank it last of all, but he didn't care twopence for it. Scrooge was the Ogre of the family. The mention of his name cast a dark shadow on the party, which was not dispelled for full five minutes. After it had passed away, they were ten times merrier than before, from the mere relief of Scrooge the Baleful being done with. The chestnuts and the jug went round and round; and bye and bye they had a song, about a lost child travelling in the snow, from Tiny Tim, who had a plaintive little voice, and sang it very well indeed.

There was nothing of high mark in this. They were not a handsome family; they were not well dressed; their shoes were far from being waterproof; their clothes were scanty; and Peter might have known, and very likely did, the inside of a pawnbroker's. But, they were happy, grateful, pleased with one another, and contented with the time; and when they faded, and looked happier yet in the bright sprinklings of the Spirit's torch at parting, Scrooge had his eye upon them, and especially on Tiny Tim, until the last.

It was a great surprise to Scrooge to hear a hearty laugh. It was a much greater surprise to Scrooge to recognise it as his own nephew's, and to find himself in a bright, dry, gleaming room, with the Spirit standing smiling by his side, and looking at that same nephew with approving affability!

"Ha! ha!" laughed Scrooge's nephew. "Ha, ha, ha! He said that Christmas was a humbug, as I live! He believed it too!"

"More shame for him, Fred!" said Scrooge's niece, indignantly. Bless those women! they never do anything by halves. They are always in earnest. She was very pretty; exceedingly pretty.

With a dimpled, surprised-looking, capital face; a ripe little mouth, that seemed made to be kissed—as no doubt it was.

“He’s a comical old fellow,” said Scrooge’s nephew, “that’s the truth; and not so pleasant as he might be. However, his offences carry their own punishment, and I have nothing to say against him.”

“I am sure he is very rich, Fred,” hinted Scrooge’s niece. “At least, you always tell *me* so.”

“What of that, my dear!” said Scrooge’s nephew. “His wealth is of no use to him. He don’t do any good with it. He don’t make himself comfortable with it. He hasn’t the satisfaction of thinking—ha, ha, ha!—that he is ever going to benefit *Us* with it.”

“I have no patience with him,” observed Scrooge’s niece.

“Oh, I have!” said Scrooge’s nephew. “I am sorry for him; I couldn’t be angry with him if I tried. Who suffers by his ill whims? Himself, always. Here, he takes it into his head to dislike us, and he won’t come and dine with us. What’s the consequence? He don’t lose much of a dinner.”

“Indeed, I think he loses a very good dinner,” interrupted Scrooge’s niece. Everybody else said the same, and they must be allowed to have been competent judges, because they had just had dinner; and with the dessert upon the table, were clustered round the fire by lamplight.

“Well! I am very glad to hear it,” said Scrooge’s nephew, “because I haven’t any great faith in these young housekeepers. What do *you* say, Topper?”

Topper had clearly got his eye upon one of Scrooge’s niece’s sisters, for he answered that a bachelor was a wretched outcast, who had no right to express an opinion on the subject. Whereat Scrooge’s niece’s sister—the plump one with the lace tucker: not the one with the roses—blushed.

After tea, they had some music. For they were a musical family, and knew what they were about, when they sung a Glee or Catch, I can assure you: especially Topper, who could growl away in the bass like a good one, and never swell the large veins in his forehead, or get red in the face over it.

But they didn’t devote the whole evening to music. After a while they played at forfeits; for it is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas, when its mighty Founder was a child himself. Stop! There was first a game at

blindman's buff. Of course there was. And I no more believe Topper was really blind than I believe he had eyes in his boots. My opinion is, that it was a done thing between him and Scrooge's nephew; and that the Ghost of Christmas Present knew it. The way he went after that plump sister in the lace tucker was an outrage on the credulity of human nature. Knocking down the fire-irons, tumbling over the chairs, bumping up against the piano, smothering himself amongst the curtains, wherever she went, there went he! He always knew where the plump sister was. He wouldn't catch anybody else. If you had fallen up against him (as some of them did) on purpose, he would have made a feint of endeavouring to seize you, which would have been an affront to your understanding, and would instantly have sidled off in the direction of the plump sister.

"Here is a new game," said Scrooge to the Ghost. "One half hour, Spirit, only one!"

It was a game called Yes and No, where Scrooge's nephew had to think of something, and the rest must find out what; he only answering to their questions yes or no, as the case was. The brisk fire of questioning to which he was exposed, elicited from him that he was thinking of an animal, a live animal, rather a disagreeable animal, a savage animal, an animal that growled and grunted sometimes, and talked sometimes, and lived in London, and walked about the streets, and wasn't made a show of, and wasn't led by anybody, and didn't live in a menagerie, and was never killed in a market, and was not a horse, or an ass, or a cow, or a bull, or a tiger, or a dog, or a pig, or a cat, or a bear. At every fresh question that was put to him, this nephew burst into a fresh roar of laughter; and was so inexpressibly tickled, that he was obliged to get up off the sofa and stamp. At last the plump sister, falling into a similar state, cried out:

"I have found it out! I know what it is, Fred! I know what it is!"

"What is it?" cried Fred.

"It's your uncle Scro-o-o-o-oge!"

Which it certainly was. Admiration was the universal sentiment, though some objected that the reply to "Is it a bear?" ought to have been "Yes."

"He has given us plenty of merriment, I am sure," said Fred, "and it would be ungrateful not to drink his health. Here is a

glass of mulled wine ready to our hand at the moment ; and I say, ' Uncle Scrooge ! ' ”

Uncle Scrooge had imperceptibly become so gay and light of heart, that he would have pledged the unconscious company in return, and thanked them in an inaudible speech, if the Ghost had given him time. But the whole scene passed off in the breath of the last word spoken by his nephew ; and he and the Spirit were again upon their travels.

Much they saw, and far they went, and many homes they visited, but always with a happy end. The Spirit stood beside sick beds, and they were cheerful ; on foreign lands, and they were close at home ; by struggling men, and they were patient in their greater hope ; by poverty, and it was rich. In almhouse, hospital, and jail, in misery's every refuge, where vain man in his little brief authority had not made fast the door, and barred the Spirit out, he left his blessing, and taught Scrooge his precepts.

“ Forgive me if I am not justified in what I ask,” said Scrooge, looking intently at the Spirit's robe, “ but I see something strange, and not belonging to yourself, protruding from your skirts. Is it a foot or a claw ? ”

“ It might be a claw, for the flesh there is upon it,” was the Spirit's sorrowful reply. “ Look here.”

From the foldings of its robe, it brought two children ; wretched, abject, frightful, hideous, miserable. They knelt down at its feet, and clung upon the outside of its garment.

“ Oh, Man ! look here. Look, look, down here ! ” exclaimed the Ghost.

They were a boy and girl. Yellow, meagre, ragged, scowling, wolfish ; but prostrate, too, in their humility. Where graceful youth should have filled their features out, and touched them with its freshest tints, a stale and shrivelled hand, like that of age, had pinched, and twisted them, and pulled them into shreds. Where angels might have sat enthroned, devils lurked, and glared out menacing. No change, no degradation, no perversion of humanity, in any grade, through all the mysteries of wonderful creation, has monsters half so horrible and dread.

Scrooge started back appalled. Having them shown to him in this way, he tried to say they were fine children, but the words choked themselves rather than be parties to a lie of such enormous magnitude.

"Spirit! are they yours?" Scrooge could say no more.

"They are Man's," said the Spirit, looking down upon them. "And they cling to me, appealing from their fathers. This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want. Beware of them both, and all of their degree, but most of all beware this boy, for on his brow I see that written which is Doom, unless the writing be erased. Deny it!" cried the Spirit, stretching out its hand towards the city. "Slander those who tell it ye! Admit it for your factious purposes, and make it worse! And bide the end!"

The bell struck twelve.

Scrooge looked about him for the Ghost, and saw it not. As the last stroke ceased to vibrate, he remembered the prediction of old Jacob Marley, and, lifting up his eyes, beheld a solemn Phantom, draped and hooded coming, like a mist along the ground, towards him.

STAVE FOUR.

THE LAST OF THE SPIRITS.

THE Phantom slowly, gravely, silently, approached. When it came near him, Scrooge bent down upon his knee; for in the very air through which this Spirit moved it seemed to scatter gloom and mystery.

It was shrouded in a deep black garment, which concealed its head, its face, its form, and left nothing of it visible, save one outstretched hand.

"I am in the presence of the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come?" said Scrooge.

The Spirit answered not, but pointed onward with its hand.

"Ghost of the Future!" he exclaimed, "I fear you more than any spectre I have seen. But as I know your purpose is to do me good, and as I hope to live to be another man from what I was, I am prepared to bear you company, and do it with a thankful heart. Will you not speak to me?"

It gave him no reply. The hand was pointed straight before them.

"Lead on!" said Scrooge. "Lead on! The night is waning fast, and it is precious time to me, I know. Lead on, Spirit!"

They scarcely seemed to enter the city; for the city rather seemed to spring up about them, and encompass them of its own

act. They went into an obscure part of the town, where Scrooge had never penetrated before, although he recognised its situation and its bad repute. Far in this den of infamous resort there was a low-browed, beetling shop, where iron, old rags, bottles, bones, and greasy offal, were bought. Sitting in among the wares he dealt in, was a grey-haired rascal, nearly seventy years of age. Scrooge and the Phantom came into the presence of this man, just as a woman with a heavy bundle slunk into the shop. But she had scarcely entered, when another woman, similarly laden, came in too; and she was closely followed by a man in faded black. After a short period of blank astonishment, in which the old man with the pipe had joined them, they all three burst into a laugh.

"Let the charwoman alone to be the first!" cried she who had entered first. "Let the laundress alone to be the second; and let the undertaker's man alone to be the third. Look here, old Joe, here's a chance! If we haven't all three met here without meaning it!"

"You couldn't have met in a better place," said old Joe. "Come into the parlour. You were made free of it long ago, you know; and the other two ain't strangers."

"What odds then! What odds, Mrs. Dilber?" said the woman. "Every person has a right to take care of themselves. *He* always did!"

"That's true, indeed," said the laundress. "No man more so."

"Why then, don't stand staring as if you was afraid, woman; who's the wiser? We're not going to pick holes in each other's coats, I suppose?"

"No, indeed!" said Mrs. Dilber and the man together. "We should hope not."

"Very well, then!" cried the woman. "That's enough. Who's the worse for the loss of a few things like these? Not a dead man, I suppose."

"No, indeed," said Mrs. Dilber, laughing.

"If he wanted to keep 'em after he was dead, a wicked old screw," pursued the woman, "why wasn't he natural in his lifetime? If he had been, he'd have had somebody to look after him when he was struck with Death, instead of lying gasping out his last there, alone by himself."

"It's the truest word that ever was spoke," said Mrs. Dilber. "It's a judgment on him."

"I wish it was a little heavier judgment," replied the woman; "and it should have been, you may depend upon it, if I could have laid my hands on anything else. Open that bundle, old Joe, and let me know the value of it. Speak out plain. I'm not afraid to be the first, nor afraid for them to see it. We knew pretty well that we were helping ourselves, before we met here, I believe. It's no sin. Open the bundle, Joe."

Joe went down on his knees for the greater convenience of opening it, and having unfastened a great many knots, dragged out a large heavy roll of some dark stuff.

"What do you call this?" said Joe. "Bed-curtains!"

"Ah! Bed-curtains!"

"You don't mean to say you took 'em down, rings and all, with him lying there?"

"Yes I do. Why not? Don't drop that oil upon the blankets, now."

"His blankets?"

"Whose else's do you think? He isn't likely to take cold without 'em, I dare say."

"I hope he didn't die of anything catching? Eh?"

"Don't you be afraid of that. I ain't so fond of his company that I'd loiter about him for such things, if he did. Ah! You may look through that shirt till your eyes ache; but you won't find a hole in it, nor a threadbare place. It's the best he had, and a fine one too. They'd have wasted it, if it hadn't been for me."

"What do you call wasting of it?"

"Putting it on him to be buried in, to be sure," replied the woman with a laugh.

"Spirit!" said Scrooge, shuddering from head to foot. "I see, I see. The case of this unhappy man might be my own. My life tends that way, now. Oh! what is this?"

He recoiled in terror, for the scene had changed; and now he almost touched a bed—a bare, uncurtained bed—on which, beneath a ragged sheet, there lay a something covered up, which, though it was dumb, announced itself in awful language. The room was very dark, too dark to be observed with any accuracy, though Scrooge glanced round it in obedience to a secret impulse, anxious to know what kind of room it was. A pale light, rising in the outer air, fell straight upon the bed, and on it, plundered and bereft, unwatched, unwept, uncared for, was the body of this man.

He lay, in the dark, empty house, with not a man, a woman, or a child, to say he was kind to me in this or that, and for the memory of one kind word I will be kind to him. A cat was tearing at the door, and there was a sound of gnawing rats beneath the hearth-stone. What *they* wanted in the room of death, and why they were so restless and disturbed, Scrooge did not dare to think.

"Spirit!" he said, "this is a fearful place. In leaving it, I shall not leave its lesson, trust me. Let us go! Let me see some tenderness connected with a death," said Scrooge; "or that dark chamber, Spirit, which we left just now, will be for ever present to me."

The Ghost conducted him through several streets. They entered poor Bob Cratchit's house; the dwelling he had visited before; and found the mother and the children seated round the fire. Quiet. Very quiet. The noisy little Cratchits were as still as statues in one corner, and sat looking up at Peter, who had a book before him. The mother and her daughters were engaged in sewing. But surely they were very quiet!

"And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them."

Where had Scrooge heard those words? He had not dreamed them. The boy must have read them out, as he and the Spirit crossed the threshold. Why did he not go on? The mother laid her work upon the table, and put her hand up to her face.

"The colour hurts my eyes," she said.

The colour? Ah, poor Tiny Tim!

"They're better now again," said Cratchit's wife. "It makes them weak by candle-light; and I wouldn't show weak eyes to your father when he comes home, for the world. It must be near his time."

"Past it rather," Peter answered, shutting up his book. "But I think he has walked a little slower than he used, these few last evenings, mother."

They were very quiet again. At last she said, and in a steady, cheerful voice, that only faltered once:

"I have known him walk with—I have known him walk with Tiny Tim upon his shoulder, very fast, indeed."

"And so have I," cried Peter. "Often."

"And so have I," exclaimed another. So had all.

"But he was very light to carry," she resumed, intent upon her

work, "and his father loved him so, that it was no trouble—no trouble. And there is your father at the door!"

She hurried out to meet him; and little Bob in his comforter—he had need of it, poor fellow—came in. His tea was ready for him on the hob, and they all tried who should help him to it most. Then the two young Cratchits got upon his knees and laid, each child, a little cheek, against his face, as if they said "Don't mind it, father. Don't be grieved!"

Bob was very cheerful with them, and spoke pleasantly to all the family. He looked at the work upon the table, and praised the industry and speed of Mrs. Cratchit and the girls. They would be done long before Sunday, he said.

"Sunday! You went to-day, then, Robert?" said his wife.

"Yes, my dear," returned Bob. "I wish you could have gone. It would have done you good to see how green a place it is. But you'll see it often. I promised him that I would walk there on Sunday. My little, little child!" cried Bob. "My little child!"

He broke down all at once. He couldn't help it. If he could have helped it, he and his child would have been farther apart perhaps than they were.

"Spectre," said Scrooge, "something informs me that our parting moment is at hand. I know it, but I know not how. Tell me what man that was whom we saw lying dead?"

The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come conveyed him to a churchyard. Here, then, the wretched man whose name he had now to learn, lay underneath the ground. It was a worthy place. Walled in by houses; overrun by grass and weeds, the growth of vegetation's death, not life; choked up with too much burying; fat with repleted appetite. A worthy place!

The Spirit stood among the graves, and pointed down to One. He advanced towards it trembling. The Phantom was exactly as it had been, but he dreaded that he saw new meaning in its solemn shape.

"Before I draw nearer to that stone to which you point," said Scrooge, "answer me one question. Are these the shadows of the things that Will be, or are they shadows of the things that May be, only?"

Still the Ghost pointed downward to the grave by which it stood.

"Men's courses will foreshadow certain ends, to which, if

persevered in, they must lead," said Scrooge. "But if the courses be departed from, the ends will change. Say it is thus with what you show me!"

The Spirit was immovable as ever.

Scrooge crept towards it, trembling as he went; and following the finger, read upon the stone of the neglected grave his own name—EBENEZER SCROOGE.

"Am I that man who lay upon the bed?" he cried, upon his knees.

The finger pointed from the grave to him, and back again.

"No, Spirit! Oh no, no! Hear me! I am not the man I was. I will not be the man I must have been but for this intercourse. Why show me this, if I am past all hope?"

For the first time the hand appeared to shake.

"Good Spirit, your nature intercedes for me, and pities me. Assure me that I yet may change these shadows you have shown me, by an altered life? I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year. I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future. The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me. I will not shut out the lessons that they teach. Oh, tell me I may sponge away the writing on this stone!"

Holding up his hands in a last prayer to have his fate reversed, he saw an alteration in the Phantom's hood and dress. It shrunk, collapsed, and dwindled down into a bedpost.

Yes! and the bedpost was his own. The bed was his own, the room was his own. Best and happiest of all, the Time before him was his own, to make amends in!

"I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future!" Scrooge repeated, as he scrambled out of bed. "The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me. Oh Jacob Marley! Heaven, and the Christmas Time be praised for this! I say it on my knees, old Jacob; on my knees!"

"They are not torn down," cried Scrooge, folding one of his bed-curtains in his arms, "they are not torn down, rings and all. They are here—I am here—the shadows of the things that would have been may be dispelled. They will be. I know they will!"

He was checked in his transports by the churches ringing out the lustiest peals he had ever heard.

Running to the window, he opened it, and put out his head. No fog, no mist; clear, bright, jovial, stirring, cold.

"What's to-day?" cried Scrooge, calling downward to a boy in Sunday clothes, who perhaps had loitered in to look about him.

"EH?" returned the boy, with all his might of wonder.

"What's to-day, my fine fellow?" said Scrooge.

"To-day!" replied the boy. "Why, CHRISTMAS DAY."

"It's Christmas Day!" said Scrooge to himself. "I hav'nt missed it. The Spirits have done it all in one night. They can do anything they like. Of course they can. Of course they can. Hallo, my fine fellow!"

"Hallo!" returned the boy.

"Do you know the Poulterer's, in the next street but one, at the corner?"

"I should hope I did."

"An intelligent boy! A remarkable boy! Do you know whether they've sold the prize Turkey that was hanging up there?—Not the little prize Turkey: the big one?"

"What, the one as big as me?"

"What a delightful boy! It's a pleasure to talk to him. Yes, my buck!"

"It's hanging there now."

"Is it? Go and buy it."

"Walk-ER!" exclaimed the boy.

"No, no," said Scrooge, "I am in earnest. Go and buy it, and tell 'em to bring it here, that I may give them the directions where to take it. Come back with the man, and I'll give you a shilling. Come back with him in less than five minutes, and I'll give you half-a-crown!"

The boy was off like a shot.

"I'll send it to Bob Cratchit's. He shan't know who sends it. It's twice the size of Tiny Tim. Joe Miller never made such a joke as sending it to Bob's will be!"

The hand in which he wrote the address was not a steady one; but write it he did, somehow, and went down stairs to open the street door, ready for the coming of the poulterer's man.

It *was* a Turkey! He never could have stood upon his legs, that bird. He would have snapped 'em short off in a minute, like sticks of sealing-wax.

He dressed himself "all in his best," and at last got out into the streets. The people were by this time pouring forth, as he had seen them with the Ghost of Christmas Present; and walking with

his hands behind him, Scrooge regarded every one with a delighted smile. He looked so irresistibly pleasant, in a word, that three or four good-humoured fellows said "Good morning, sir! A merry Christmas to you!" And Scrooge said often afterwards, that of all the blithe sounds he had ever heard, those were the blithest in his ears.

He went to church, and walked about the streets, and watched the people hurrying to and fro, and patted the children on the head. In the afternoon, he turned his steps towards his nephew's house. He passed the door a dozen times, before he had the courage to go up and knock. But he made a dash, and did it:

"Is your master at home, my dear?" said Scrooge to the girl.

"Yes, sir."

"Where is he, my love?"

"He's in the dining-room, sir, along with mistress. I'll show you up stairs, if you please."

"Thank'ee. He knows me. I'll go in here, my dear."

"Fred!" said Scrooge.

"Why," cried Fred, "who's that?"

"It's I. Your uncle Scrooge. I have come to dinner. Will you let me in, Fred?"

Let him in! It is a mercy he didn't shake his arm off. He was at home in five minutes. Nothing could be heartier. His niece looked just the same. So did Topper when *he* came. So did the plump sister, when *she* came. So did everyone when *they* came. Wonderful party, wonderful games, wonderful unanimity, won-der-ful happiness!

But he was early at the office next morning. Oh he was early there. If he could only be there first, and catch Bob Cratchit coming late! That was the thing he had set his heart upon. And he did it; yes he did! The clock struck nine. No Bob. A quarter-past. No Bob. He was full eighteen minutes and a-half behind his time. Scrooge sat with his door wide open, that he might see him come into the Tank. His hat was off, before he opened the door; his comforter too. He was on his stool in a jiffy; driving away with his pen, as if he were trying to overtake nine o'clock.

"Hallo!" growled Scrooge, in his accustomed voice as near as he could feign it. "What do you mean by coming here at this time of day?"

"I am very sorry, sir," said Bob. "I *am* behind my time."

"You are! Yes. I think you are. Step this way, sir, if you please."

"It's only once a year, sir. It shall not be repeated. I was making rather merry yesterday, sir."

"Now, I'll tell you what, my friend, I am not going to stand this sort of thing any longer. And therefore," Scrooge continued, leaping from his stool, and giving Bob such a dig in the waistcoat that he staggered back into the Tank again: "and therefore I am about to raise your salary!"

Bob trembled, and got a little nearer to the ruler.

"A merry Christmas, Bob!" said Scrooge, with an earnestness that could not be mistaken, as he clapped him on the back. "A merrier Christmas, Bob, my good fellow, than I have given you for many a year! I'll raise your salary, and endeavour to assist your struggling family, and we will discuss your affairs this very afternoon, over a Christmas bowl of smoking bishop, Bob! Make up the fires, and buy another coal-scuttle before you dot another i, Bob Cratchit!"

Scrooge was better than his word. He did it all, and infinitely more; and to Tiny Tim, who did not die, he was a second father. He became as good a friend, as good a master, and as good a man, as the good old city knew, or any other good old city, town, or borough, in the good old world. Some people laughed to see the alteration in him, but his own heart laughed, and that was quite enough for him.

He had no further intercourse with Spirits, but lived upon the Total Abstinence Principle, ever afterwards; and it was always said of him, that he knew how to keep Christmas well, if any man alive possessed the knowledge. May that be truly said of us, and all of us! And so, as Tiny Tim observed, God bless Us, Every One!

[By kind permission of Messrs. Chapman and Hall.]

NOTE—In selections such as the foregoing, which are divided into parts, suitable songs introduced between the divisions will be found very effective, and will give a rest to the reader.

THE PARLOUR ORATOR.

(Condensed.)

"WON'T you walk into the parlour, sir?" said the young lady, in seductive tones.

"You had better walk into the parlour, sir," said the little old landlord, throwing his chair back, and looking round one side of the screen to survey our appearance.

"You had much better step into the parlour, sir," said the little old lady, popping out her head on the other side of the screen.

We cast a slight glance around, as if to express our ignorance of the locality so much recommended. The little old landlord observed it, and forthwith ushered us into the parlour itself—an ancient, dark-looking room, with oaken wainscoting, a sanded floor, and a high mantelpiece.

At the furthest table, nearest the fire, with his face towards the door at the bottom of the room, sat a stoutish man of about forty, whose short, stiff, black hair curled closely round a broad, high forehead, and a face of rather inflamed appearance. He was smoking, and had that confident oracular air which marked him as the leading politician, general authority, and universal anecdote-relater of the place.

On his right hand sat an elderly gentleman with a white head, and broad-brimmed brown hat; and on his left, a sharp-nosed, light-haired man, in a brown surtout.

"Very extraordinary!" said the light-haired man, after a pause of five minutes. A murmur of assent ran through the company.

"Not at all extraordinary—not at all," said the red-faced man. "Why should it be extraordinary?—why is it extraordinary? prove it to be extraordinary."

"Oh, if you come to that—" said the light-haired man.

"Come to that!" ejaculated the man with the red face; "but we must come to that. We stand, in these times, upon a calm elevation of intellectual attainment, and not in the dark recess of mental deprivation. Proof is what I require—proof, and not assertions, in these stirring times. Every gen'lem'n that knows me, knows what was the nature and effect of my observations,

when it was in the contemplation of the Old-street Suburban Representative Discovery Society to recommend a candidate for that place in Cornwall there—I forget the name of it. ‘Mr. Snobee,’ said Mr. Wilson, ‘is a fit and proper person to represent the borough in Parliament.’ ‘Prove it,’ says I. ‘He is a friend to Reform,’ says Mr. Wilson. ‘Prove it,’ says I. ‘The abolitionist of the national debt, the unflinching opponent of pensions, the uncompromising advocate of the negro, the reducer of sinecures and the duration of Parliaments; the extender of nothing but the suffrages of the people,’ says Mr. Wilson. ‘Prove it,’ says I. ‘His acts prove it,’ says he. ‘Prove *them*,’ says I.

“And he could not prove them,” said the red-faced man, looking round triumphantly; “and the borough didn’t have him; and if you carried this principle to the full extent you’d have no debt, no pensions, no sinecures, no negroes, no nothing. And then, standing upon an elevation of intellectual attainment, and having reached the summit of popular prosperity, you might bid defiance to the nations of the earth, and erect yourselves in the proud confidence of wisdom and superiority. This is my argument—this always has been my argument—and if I was a Member of the House of Commons to-morrow I’d make ’em shake in their shoes with it.”

“Well!” said the sharp-nosed man, “I always do say, that of all the gentlemen I have the pleasure of meeting in this room, there is not one whose conversation I like to hear so much as Mr. Rogers’, or who is such improving company.”

“Improving company!” said Mr. Rogers, for that was his name, “you may say I am improving company, for I’ve improved you all to some purpose, though as to my conversation being as my friend Mr. Ellis here describes it, that is not for me to say anything about. You, gentlemen, are the best judges on that point; but this I will say, when I came into this parish, and first used this room, ten years ago, I don’t believe there was one man in it who knew he was a slave, and now you all know it, and writhe under it. Inscribe that upon my tomb, and I am satisfied.”

“Why as to inscribing it on your tomb,” said a little green-grocer, with a rather chubby face, “of course you can have anything chalked up, as you likes to pay for, so far as it relates to yourself and your affairs, but when you come to talk about slaves, and that there abuse, you’d better keep it in the family, ’cos I for one don’t like to be called them names night after night.”

"You *are* a slave, and the most pitiable of all slaves."

"Werry hard if I am," interrupted the greengrocer, "for I got no good out of the twenty million that was paid for 'mancipation anyhow.'"

"A willing slave, resigning the dearest birthright of your children—neglecting the sacred call of Liberty—who, standing imploringly before you, appeals to the warmest feelings of your heart, and points to your helpless infants, but in vain."

"Prove it," said the greengrocer.

"Prove it!" sneered the man with the red face. "What! bending beneath the yoke of an insolent and factious oligarchy; bowed down by the domination of cruel laws; groaning beneath tyranny and oppression on every hand, at every side, and in every corner. Prove it!——"

"Ah, to be sure, Mr. Rogers," said a stout broker. "Ah, to be sure, that's the point."

"Of course, of course," said divers members of the company.

"You had better let him alone, Tommy," said the broker, by way of advice to the little greengrocer, "he can tell what's o'clock by an eight-day without looking at the minute hand, he can. Try it on, on some other suit; it won't do with him, Tommy."

"What is a man?" continued the red-faced specimen of the species, jerking his hat indignantly from its peg on the wall, "What is an Englishman? Is he to be trampled upon by every oppressor? Is he to be knocked down at everybody's bidding? What's freedom? Not a standing army. What's a standing army? Not freedom. What's general happiness? Not universal misery. Liberty ain't the window tax, is it? The Lords ain't the Commons, are they?" And the red-faced man, gradually bursting into a radiating sentence, in which such adjectives as "dastardly," "oppressive," "violent," and "sanguinary," formed the most conspicuous words, knocked his hat indignantly over his eyes, left the room, and slammed the door after him.

"Wonderful man!" said he of the sharp nose.

"Splendid speaker!" added the broker.

"Great power!" said everybody but the greengrocer.

MRS. CORNEY MAKES TEA, AND MR. BUMBLE MAKES LOVE.

(Adapted.)

SCENE.—*The Workhouse. Private apartments of MRS. CORNEY, the Matron thereof. MR. BUMBLE enters, bringing in some wine to be given to the sick paupers. After various remarks upon out-door relief, he prepares to take his departure, when MRS. CORNEY thus addresses him:—*

“YOU’LL have a very cold walk, Mr. Bumble.”

“It blows, ma’am,” replied Mr. Bumble, turning up his coat-collar, “enough to cut one’s ears off.”

The matron looked, from the little kettle, to the beadle, who was moving towards the door; and as the beadle coughed, preparatory to bidding her good-night, bashfully inquired whether—whether he wouldn’t take a cup of tea?

Mr. Bumble instantaneously turned back his collar again; laid his hat and stick upon a chair; and drew another chair up to the table.

“Sweet? Mr. Bumble,” inquired the matron, taking up the sugar-basin.

“Very sweet, indeed, ma’am,” replied Mr. Bumble. He fixed his eyes on Mrs. Corney as he said this: and if ever a beadle looked tender, Mr. Bumble was that beadle at that moment.

“You have a cat, ma’am, I see, and kittens too, I declare!”

“I am so fond of them, Mr. Bumble, you can’t think. They’re so happy, so frolicsome, and so cheerful, that they are quite companions for me.”

“Very nice animals, ma’am,” replied Mr. Bumble, approvingly; “so very domestic.”

“Oh, yes!” rejoined the matron; “so fond of their home too, that it’s quite a pleasure, I’m sure.”

“Mrs. Corney, ma’am,” said Mr. Bumble, slowly, and marking the time with his tea-spoon, “I mean to say this, ma’am; that any cat, or kitten, that could live with you, ma’am, and *not* be fond of its home, must be a ass, ma’am.”

“Oh, Mr. Bumble!”

“It’s of no use disguising facts, ma’am; I would drown it myself, with pleasure.”

"Then you're a cruel man," said the matron; "and a very hard-hearted man besides."

"Hard-harted, ma'am," said Mr. Bumble, "hard!" Mr. Bumble resigned his cup without another word; squeezed Mrs. Corney's little finger as she took it; and inflicting two open-handed slaps upon his laced waiscoat, gave a mighty sigh, and hitched his chair a very little morsel farther from the fire.

The table was a round one; consequently Mr. Bumble, moving his chair by little and little, soon began to diminish the distance between himself and the matron; and, continuing to travel round the outer edge of the circle, brought his chair, in time, close to that in which the matron was seated. Indeed, the two chairs touched; and when they did so, Mr. Bumble stopped.

Now, if the matron had moved her chair to the right, she would have been scorched by the fire; and, if to the left, she must have fallen into Mr. Bumble's arms; so (being a discreet matron, and no doubt foreseeing these consequences at a glance) she remained where she was, and handed Mr. Bumble another cup of tea.

"Hard-hearted, Mrs. Corney?" said Mr. Bumble; "are *you* hard-hearted, Mrs. Corney?"

"Dear me! what a very curious question from a single man. What can you want to know for, Mr. Bumble?"

The beadle drank his tea to the last drop; finished a piece of toast; whisked the crumbs off his knees; wiped his lips; and deliberately kissed the matron.

"Mr. Bumble," cried that discreet lady in a whisper; for the fright was so great that she had quite lost her voice, "Mr. Bumble, I shall scream!" Mr. Bumble made no reply, but in a slow and dignified manner put his arm round the matron's waist.

As the lady had stated her intention of screaming, of course she would have screamed at this additional boldness but that the exertion was rendered unnecessary by a hasty knocking at the door.

A withered old female pauper put in her head: "If you please, mistress, Old Sally is a-going fast."

The matron hastened away, asking the beadle to await her return.

Mr. Bumble's conduct, on being left to himself, was rather inexplicable. He opened the closet, counted the tea-spoons, weighed the sugar-tongs, closely inspected a silver milk-pot to ascertain that it was of the genuine metal; and, having satisfied his curiosity on these points, put on his cocked-hat corner-wise, and danced

with much gravity four distinct times round the table. Having gone through this very extraordinary performance, he took off the cocked-hat again; and spreading himself before the fire with his back towards it, seemed to be mentally engaged in taking an exact inventory of the furniture.

Mr. Bumble had re-counted the tea-spoons, re-weighed the sugar-tongs, made a closer inspection of the milk-pot, and ascertained to a nicety the exact condition of the furniture, down to the very horse-hair seats of the chairs; and had repeated each process full half-a-dozen times before he began to think that it was time for Mrs. Corney to return. Thinking begets thinking; and, as there were no sounds of Mrs. Corney's approach, it occurred to Mr. Bumble that it would be an innocent and virtuous way of spending the time, if he were further to allay his curiosity by a cursory glance at the interior of Mrs. Corney's chest of drawers.

Having listened at the keyhole, to assure himself that nobody was approaching the chamber, Mr. Bumble, beginning at the bottom, proceeded to make himself acquainted with the contents of the three long drawers, which, being filled with various garments of good fashion and texture, carefully preserved between two layers of old newspapers, speckled with dried lavender, seemed to yield him exceeding satisfaction. Arriving, in course of time, at the right-hand corner drawer (in which was the key), and beholding therein a small padlocked box, which, being shaken, gave forth a pleasant sound, as of the chinking of coin, Mr. Bumble returned with a stately walk to the fireplace; and, resuming his old attitude, said, with a grave and determined air, "I'll do it!"

Mrs. Corney, hurrying into the room, threw herself, in a breathless state, on a chair by the fireside; and covering her eyes with one hand, placed the other over her heart, and gasped for breath.

"Mrs. Corney," said Mr. Bumble, stooping over the matron, "what is this, ma'am? has anything happened, ma'am? Pray answer me; I'm on—on——" Mr. Bumble, in his alarm, could not immediately think of the word "tenter-hooks," so he said "broken bottles, ma'am."

"Oh, Mr. Bumble! I have been so dreadfully put out!"

"Put out, ma'am! Who has dared to——? I know! This is them wicious paupers!"

"It's dreadful to think of!"

"Then *don't* think of it, ma'am."

"I can't help it."

"Then take something, ma'am. A little of the wine?"

"Not for the world!" replied Mrs. Corney. "I couldn't—oh! The top shelf in the right-hand corner—oh!" Uttering these words, the good lady pointed, distractedly, to the cupboard, and underwent a convulsion from internal spasms. Mr. Bumble rushed to the closet; and snatching a pint green-glass bottle from the shelf thus incoherently indicated, filled a tea-cup with its contents, and held it to the lady's lips.

"I'm better now," said Mrs. Corney, falling back, after drinking half of it.

Mr. Bumble raised his eyes piously to the ceiling in thankfulness; and bringing them down again to the brim of the cup, lifted it to his nose.

"Peppermint," exclaimed Mrs. Corney, in a faint voice, smiling gently on the beadle as she spoke. "Try it! There's a little—a little something else in it."

Mr. Bumble tasted the medicine with a doubtful look; smacked his lips; took another taste; and put the cup down empty.

"It's very comforting," said Mrs. Corney.

"Very much so indeed, ma'am," said the beadle. As she spoke, he drew a chair beside the matron, and tenderly inquired what had happened to distress her.

"Nothing," replied Mrs. Corney. "I am a foolish, excitable, weak creetur."

"Not weak, ma'am. Are you a weak creetur, Mrs. Corney?"

"We are all weak creeturs," said Mrs. Corney, laying down a general principle.

"So we are," said the beadle.

Nothing was said, on either side, for a minute or two afterwards. By the expiration of that time, Mr. Bumble had illustrated the position by removing his left arm from the back of Mrs. Corney's chair, where it had previously rested, to Mrs. Corney's apron-string, round which it gradually became entwined.

"We are all weak creeturs," said Mr. Bumble.

Mrs. Corney sighed.

"Don't sigh, Mrs. Corney."

"I can't help it." And she sighed again.

"This is a very comfortable room, ma'am. Another room and this, ma'am, would be a complete thing."

"It would be too much for one," murmured the lady.

"But not for two, ma'am,. Eh, Mrs. Corney?"

Mrs. Corney drooped her head when the beadle said this; the beadle drooped his, to get a view of Mrs. Corney's face. Mrs. Corney, with great propriety, turned her head away, and released her hand to get at her pocket-handkerchief; but insensibly replaced it in that of Mr. Bumble.

"The Board allow you coals, don't they, Mrs. Corney?"

"And candles."

"Coals, candles, and house-rent free. Oh, Mrs. Corney, what a Angel you are.

The lady was not proof against this burst of feeling. She sunk into Mr. Bumble's arms; and that gentleman, in his agitation, imprinted a passionate kiss upon her chaste nose.

"Such parochial perfection!" exclaimed Mr. Bumble rapturously.

"You know that Mr. Slout is worse to-night, my fascinator?"

"Yes," replied Mrs. Corney, bashfully.

"He can't live a week, the doctor says," pursued Mr. Bumble.

"He is the master of this establishment; his death will cause a vacancy; that vacancy must be filled up. Oh, Mrs. Corney, what a prospect this opens! What a opportunity for a joining of hearts and housekeepings!"

Mrs. Corney sobbed.

"The little word? The one little, little, little word, my blessed Corney?"

"Ye—ye—yes!" sighed out the matron.

"One more," pursued the beadle; "compose your darling feelings for only one more. When is it to come off?"

Mrs. Corney twice essayed to speak; and twice failed. At length, summoning up courage, she threw her arms round Mr. Bumble's neck, and said it might be as soon as ever he pleased, and that he was "a irresistible duck!"

A CONTRAST, NOT UNCOMMON IN MATRIMONIAL CASES.

MR BUMBLE sat in the workhouse parlour. Mr. Bumble was no longer a beadle. Mr. Bumble had married Mrs. Corney, and was master of the workhouse.

"And to-morrow two months it was done!" said Mr Bumble, with a sigh. "It seems a age. I sold myself for six teaspoons, a pair of sugar-tongs, and a milk-pot; with a small quantity of second-hand furniture, and twenty pound in money. I went very reasonably. Cheap, dirt cheap!"

"Cheap!" cried a shrill voice in Mr. Bumble's ear: "you would have been dear at any price; and dear enough I paid for you.

Mr. Bumble turned, and encountered the face of his interesting consort, who, imperfectly comprehending the few words she had overheard of his complaint, had hazarded the foregoing remark at a venture.

"Mrs. Bumble, ma'am!" said Mr. Bumble, with sentimental sternness.

"Well?" cried the lady.

"Have the goodness to look at me," said Mr. Bumble, fixing his eyes upon her.

"If she stands such a eye as that," said Mr. Bumble to himself, "she can stand anything. It is a eye I never knew to fail with paupers. If it fails with her, my power is gone."

Whether an exceedingly small expansion of eye be sufficient to quell paupers, who, being lightly fed, are in no very high condition; or whether the late Mrs. Corney was particularly proof against eagle glances; are matters of opinion. The matter of fact, is, that the matron was in no way overpowered by Mr. Bumble's scowl, but, on the contrary, treated it with great disdain, and even raised a laugh thereat, which sounded as though it were genuine.

On hearing this most unexpected sound, Mr. Bumble looked, first incredulous, and afterwards amazed. He then relapsed into his former state; nor did he rouse himself until his attention was again awakened by the voice of his partner.

"Are you going to sit snoring there, all day?" inquired Mrs. Bumble.

"I am going to sit here as long as I think proper, ma'am, and although I was *not* snoring, I shall snore, gape, sneeze, laugh, or cry, as the humour strikes me; such being my prerogative."

"Your prerogative!"

"I said the word, ma'am. The prerogative of a man is to command."

"And what's the prerogative of a woman?"

"To obey, ma'am," thundered Mr. Bumble. "Your late unfort'nate husband should have taught it you; and then, perhaps, he might have been alive now. I wish he was, poor man!"

Mrs. Bumble, seeing at a glance, that the decisive moment had now arrived, and that a blow struck for the mastership on one side or other, must necessarily be final and conclusive, no sooner heard this allusion to the dead and gone, than she dropped into a chair, and with a loud scream that Mr. Bumble was a hard-hearted brute, fell into a paroxysm of tears. But, tears were not the things to find their way to Mr. Bumble's soul; his heart was waterproof. He eyed his good lady with looks of great satisfaction, and begged that she should cry her hardest: the exercise being looked upon, by the faculty, as strongly conducive to health.

"It opens the lungs, washes the countenance, exercises the eyes, and softens down the temper," said Mr. Bumble. "So cry away!"

As he discharged himself of this pleasantry, Mr. Bumble took his hat from a peg, and sauntered towards the door, with much ease and waggishness depicted in his whole appearance. Now, Mrs. Corney that was, had tried the tears, because they were less troublesome than a manual assault; but, she was quite prepared to make trial of the latter mode of proceeding, as Mr. Bumble was not long in discovering. The first proof he experienced of the fact was conveyed in a hollow sound, immediately succeeded by the sudden flying off of his hat to the opposite end of the room. This preliminary proceeding laying bare his head, the expert lady, clasping him tightly round the throat with one hand, inflicted a shower of blows (dealt with singular vigour and dexterity) upon it with the other. This done, she created a little variety by scratching his face, and tearing his hair off; and having, by this time, inflicted as much punishment as she deemed necessary for the offence, she pushed him over a chair, which was luckily well situated for the purpose: and defied him to talk about his prerogative again, if he dared.

"Get up!" said Mrs. Bumble in a voice of command, "and take yourself away from here, unless you want me to do something desperate."

Mr. Bumble rose with a very rueful countenance: wondering much what something desperate might be. Picking up his hat, he looked towards the door.

"Are you going?" demanded Mrs. Bumble.

"Certainly, my dear, certainly. I didn't intend to—I'm going, my dear! You are so very violent, that really I——"

At this instant Mrs. Bumble stepped hastily forward to replace the carpet, which had been kicked up in the scuffle. Mr. Bumble immediately darted out of the room, leaving the late Mrs. Corney in full possession of the field.

Mr. Bumble was fairly taken by surprise, and fairly beaten. But the measure of his degradation was not yet full. After making a tour of the house, Mr. Bumble came to a room where some of the female paupers were usually employed in washing the parish linen: whence the sound of voices in conversation now proceeded.

"Hem!" said Mr. Bumble, summoning up all his native dignity. "These women, at least, shall continue to respect the prerogative. Hallo! hallo there! What do you mean by this noise, you hussies?"

With these words Mr. Bumble opened the door, and walked in with a very fierce and angry manner: which was at once exchanged for a most humiliated and cowering air, as his eyes unexpectedly rested on the form of his lady wife.

"My dear," said Mr. Bumble, "I didn't know you were here."

"Didn't know I was here!" repeated Mrs. Bumble. "What do *you* do here?"

"I thought they were talking rather too much to be doing their work properly, my dear."

"*You* thought they were talking too much! What business is it of yours?"

"It's very true, you're matron here, my dear; but I thought you mightn't be in the way just then."

"I'll tell you what, Mr. Bumble, we don't want any of your interference. You're a great deal too fond of poking your nose into things that don't concern you, making everybody in the house laugh the moment your back is turned, and making yourself look like a fool every hour in the day. Be off; come!"

Mr. Bumble, seeing with excruciating feelings, the delight of the

two old paupers, who were tittering together most rapturously, hesitated for an instant. Mrs. Bumble, whose patience brooked no delay, caught up a bowl of soap-suds, and motioning him towards the door, ordered him instantly to depart, on pain of receiving the contents upon his portly person.

What could Mr. Bumble do? He looked dejectedly round, and slunk away; and, as he reached the door, the titterings of the paupers broke into a shrill chuckle of irrepressible delight. It wanted but this. He was degraded in their eyes; he had lost caste and station before the very paupers; he had fallen from all the height and pomp of beadleship to the lowest depth of the most snubbed henpeckery.

"All in two months!" said Mr. Bumble, filled with dismal thoughts. "Two months! No more than two months ago I was not only my own master, but everybody else's, so far as the parochial workhouse was concerned, and now!—"

It was too much. Mr. Bumble boxed the ears of the boy who opened the gate for him (for he had reached the portal in his reverie); and walked, distractedly, into the street.

COPPERFIELD AND THE WAITER.

The coach was in the yard, shining very much all over, but without any horses to it as yet; and it looked in that state as if nothing was more unlikely than its ever going to London. I was thinking this, and wondering what would ultimately become of my box, which Mr. Barkis had put down on the yard-pavement by the pole (he having driven up the yard to turn his cart), and also what would ultimately become of me, when a lady looked out of a bow-window where some fowls and joints of meat were hanging up, and said:

"Is that the little gentleman from Blunderstone?"

"Yes, ma'am," I said.

"What name?" inquired the lady.

"Copperfield, ma'am," I said.

"That won't do," returned the lady. "Nobody's dinner is paid for here, in that name."

"Is it Murdstone, ma'am?" I said.

"If you're Master Murdstone," said the lady, "why do you go and give another name first?"

I explained to the lady how it was, who then rang a bell, and called out, "William, show the coffee-room?" upon which a waiter came running out of a kitchen on the opposite side of the yard to show it, and seemed a good deal surprised when he found he was only to show it to me.

It was a large long room with some large maps in it. I doubt if I could have felt much stranger if the maps had been real foreign countries, and I cast away in the middle of them. I felt it was taking a liberty to sit down, with my cap in my hand, on the corner of the chair nearest the door; and when the waiter laid a cloth on purpose for me, and put a set of castors on it, I think I must have turned red all over with modesty.

He brought me some chops, and vegetables, and took the covers off in such a bouncing manner that I was afraid I must have given him some offence. But he greatly relieved my mind by putting a chair for me at the table, and saying very affably, "Now, six-foot! come on!"

I thanked him, and took my seat at the board; but found it extremely difficult to handle my knife and fork with anything like dexterity, or to avoid splashing myself with the gravy, while he was standing opposite, staring so hard, and making me blush in the most dreadful manner every time I caught his eye. After watching me into the second chop, he said:

"There's half a pint of ale for you. Will you have it now?"

I thanked him and said "Yes." Upon which he poured it out of a jug into a large tumbler, and held it up against the light, and made it look beautiful.

"My eye!" he said. "It seems a good deal, don't it?"

"It does seem a good deal," I answered with a smile. For it was quite delightful to me to find him so pleasant. He was a twinkling-eyed, pimple-faced man, with his hair standing upright all over his head; and as he stood with one arm a-kimbo, holding up the glass to the light with the other hand, he looked quite friendly.

"There was a gentleman here yesterday," he said—"a stout gentleman by the name of Topsawyer—perhaps you know him?"

"No," I said, "I don't think——"

"In breeches and gaiters, broad-brimmed hat, gray coat, speckled choker," said the waiter.

"No," I said bashfully, "I haven't the pleasure——"

"He came in here," said the waiter, looking at the light through the tumbler, "ordered a glass of this ale—*would* order it—I told him not—drank it, and fell dead. It was too old for him. It oughtn't to be drawn; that's the fact."

I was very much shocked to hear of this melancholy accident, and said I thought I had better have some water.

"Why, you see," said the waiter, still looking at the light through the tumbler, with one of his eyes shut up, "our people don't like things being ordered and left. It offends 'em. But *I'll* drink it, if you like. I'm used to it, and use is everything. I don't think it'll hurt me, if I throw my head back, and take it off quick. Shall I?"

I replied that he would much oblige me by drinking it, if he thought he could do it safely, but by no means otherwise. When he did throw his head back, and take it off quick, I had a horrible fear, I confess, of seeing him meet the fate of the lamented Mr. Topsywaver, and fall lifeless on the carpet. But it didn't hurt him. On the contrary, I thought he seemed the fresher for it.

"What have we got here?" he said, putting a fork into my dish. "Not chops?"

"Chops," I said.

"I didn't know they were chops. Why a chop's the very thing to take off the bad effects of that beer? Ain't it lucky?"

So he took a chop by the bone in one hand, and a potato in the other, and ate away with a very good appetite, to my extreme satisfaction. He afterwards took another chop, and another potato; and after that another chop and another potato. When we had done, he brought me a pudding, and having set it before me, seemed to ruminate, and to become absent in his mind for some moments.

"How's the pie?" he said, rousing himself.

"It's a pudding," I made answer.

"Pudding!" he exclaimed. "Why, bless me, so it is! What!" looking at it nearer. "You don't mean to say it's a batter-pudding?"

"Yes, it is indeed."

"Why, a batter-pudding," he said, "is my favourite pudding. Ain't that lucky? Come on, little 'un, and let's see who'll get most."

The waiter certainly got most. He entreated me more than once to come in and win, but what with his table-spoon to my tea-spoon, his despatch to my despatch, and his appetite to my appetite, I was left far behind at the first mouthful, and had no chance with him. I never saw any one enjoy a pudding so much, I think; and he laughed, when it was all gone, as if his enjoyment of it lasted still.

Finding him so very friendly and companionable, it was then that I asked for the pen and ink and paper, to write to Peggotty. He not only brought it immediately, but was good enough to look over me while I wrote the letter. When I had finished it, he asked me where I was going to school.

I said, "Near London," which was all I knew.

"Oh, my eye!" he said, looking very low-spirited, "I am sorry for that."

"Why?" I asked him.

"Oh," he said, shaking his head, "that's the school where they broke the boy's ribs—two ribs—a little boy he was. I should say he was—let me see—how old are you, about?"

I told him between eight and nine.

"That's just his age," he said. "He was eight years and six months old when they broke his first rib; eight years and eight months old when they broke his second, and did for him."

I could not disguise from myself, or from the waiter, that this was an uncomfortable coincidence, and inquired how it was done. His answer was not cheering to my spirits, for it consisted of two dismal words, "With whopping."

The blowing of the coach-horn in the yard was a seasonable diversion, which made me get up and hesitatingly inquire, in the mingled pride and diffidence of having a purse (which I took out of my pocket), if there were anything to pay.

"There's a sheet of letter-paper," he returned. "Did you ever buy a sheet of letter-paper?"

I could not remember that I ever had.

"It's dear," he said, "on account of the duty. Threepence. That's the way we are taxed in this country. There's nothing else, except the waiter. Never mind the ink. I lose by that."

"What should you—what should I—how much ought I to—what would it be right to pay the waiter, if you please?" I stammered, blushing.

"If I hadn't a family, and that family hadn't the cowpock," said the waiter, "I wouldn't take a sixpence. If I didn't support a aged pairint, and a lovely sister,"—here the waiter was greatly agitated—"I wouldn't take a farthing. If I had a good place, and was treated well here, I should beg acceptance of a trifle, instead of taking it. But I live on broken wittles—and I sleep on the coals"—here the waiter burst into tears.

I was very much concerned for his misfortunes, and felt that any recognition short of ninepence would be mere brutality and hardness of heart. Therefore I gave him one of my three bright shillings, which he received with much humility and veneration, and spun up with his thumb, directly afterwards, to try the goodness of.

It was a little disconcerting to me, to find, when I was being helped up behind the coach, that I was supposed to have eaten all the dinner without any assistance. I discovered this, from overhearing the lady in the bow-window say to the guard, "Take care of that child, George, or he'll burst!"

[By kind permission of Messrs. Chapman and Hall.]

MR. LEO HUNTER CALLS.

SAM WELLER, Mr. Pickwick's faithful valet, put into his hand a card, on which was engraved the following inscription :

Mrs. Leo Hunter.

The Den. Eatanswill.

"Person's a waitin'," said Sam, epigrammatically.

"Does the person want me, Sam?" inquired Mr. Pickwick.

"He wants you particklar; and no one else'll do."

"*He.* Is it a gentleman?"

"A wery good imitation o' one, if it ain't."

"But this is a lady's card."

"Given me by a gen'l'm'n, hows'ever, and he's a waitin' in the drawing-room—said he'd rather wait all day, than not see you."

Mr. Pickwick, on hearing this determination, descended to the drawing-room, where sat a grave man, who started up on his entrance, and said, with an air of profound respect :

"Mr. Pickwick, I presume?"

"The same."

"Allow me, sir, the honour of grasping your hand. Permit me, sir, to shake it."

"Certainly," said Mr. Pickwick.

"We have heard of your fame, sir. The noise of your antiquarian discussion has reached the ears of Mrs. Leo Hunter—my wife, sir; *I am Mr. Leo Hunter*——" The stranger paused, as if he expected that Mr. Pickwick would be overcome by the disclosure; but seeing that he remained perfectly calm, proceeded:

"My wife, sir—Mrs. Leo Hunter—is proud to number among her acquaintance all those who have rendered themselves celebrated by their works and talents. Permit me, sir, to place in a conspicuous part of the list, the name of Mr. Pickwick, and his brother-members of the club that derives its name from him."

"I shall be extremely happy to make the acquaintance of such a lady, sir."

"You *shall* make it, sir. To-morrow morning, sir, we give a public breakfast—a *fête champêtre*—to a great number of those who have rendered themselves celebrated by their works and talents. Permit Mrs. Leo Hunter, sir, to have the gratification of seeing you at the Den."

"With great pleasure."

"Mrs. Leo Hunter has many of those breakfasts, sir—'feasts of reason, sir, and flows of soul,' as somebody who wrote a sonnet to Mrs. Leo Hunter on her breakfasts, feelingly and originally observed."

"Was *he* celebrated for his works and talents?"

"He was, sir; all Mrs. Leo Hunter's acquaintance are; it is her ambition, sir, to have no other acquaintance."

"It is a very noble ambition."

"When I inform Mrs. Leo Hunter that that remark fell from *your* lips, sir, she will indeed be proud. You have a gentleman in your train who has produced some beautiful little poems, I think, sir."

"My friend Mr. Snodgrass has a great taste for poetry."

"So has Mrs. Leo Hunter, sir. She dotes on poetry, sir. She adores it; I may say that her whole soul and mind are wound up, and entwined with it. She has produced some delightful pieces herself, sir. You may have met with her 'Ode to an Expiring Frog,' sir."

"I don't think I have."

"You astonish me, sir. It created an immense sensation. It was signed with an 'L' and eight stars, and appeared originally in a *Lady's Magazine*. It commenced—

' Can I view thee panting, lying
On thy stomach, without sighing;
Can I unmoved see thee dying
On a log,
Expiring frog! "'

"Beautiful!" said Mr. Pickwick.

"Fine," said Mr. Leo Hunter, "so simple."

"Very," said Mr. Pickwick.

"The next verse is still more touching. Shall I repeat it?"

"If you please."

"It runs thus—

' Say, have fiends in shape of boys,
With wild halloo, and brutal noise,
Hunted thee from marshy joys,
With a dog,
Expiring frog! "'

"Finely expressed," said Mr. Pickwick.

"All point, sir, all point; but you shall hear Mrs. Leo Hunter repeat it. *She* can do justice to it, sir. She will repeat it, in character, sir, to-morrow morning."

"In character!"

"As Minerva. But I forgot—it's a fancy-dress breakfast."

"Dear me," said Mr. Pickwick, glancing at his own figure—
"I can't possibly——"

"Can't sir; can't! Solomon Lucas, the Jew in the High-street, has thousands of fancy dresses. Consider, sir, how many appropriate characters are open for your selection. Plato, Zeno, Epicurus, Pythagoras—all founders of clubs."

"I know that, but as I cannot put myself in competition with those great men, I cannot presume to wear their dresses."

"On reflection, sir, I don't know whether it would not afford Mrs. Leo Hunter greater pleasure if her guests saw a gentleman of your celebrity in his own costume, rather than in an assumed one. I may venture to promise an exception in your case, sir—yes, I am quite certain that on behalf of Mrs. Leo Hunter I may venture to do so."

"In that case," said Mr. Pickwick, "I shall have great pleasure in coming."

"But I waste your time, sir. I know its value, sir. I will not detain you. I may tell Mrs. Leo Hunter, then, that she may confidently expect you and your distinguished friends? Good morning, sir. I am proud to have beheld so eminent a personage—not a step, sir; not a word." And Mr. Leo Hunter stalked gravely away.

Mr. Pickwick took up his hat, and repaired to the Peacock Inn, but Mr. Winkle had conveyed the intelligence of the fancy ball there before him.

"Mrs. Pott's going as Apollo," were the first words with which he saluted his leader; "only Pott objects to the tunic. So she's going to wear a white satin gown with gold spangles, and they'll know what she's meant for when they see her lyre."

"I shall go as a Bandit," interposed Mr. Tupman.

"What!" said Mr. Pickwick, with a sudden start.

"As a bandit."

"You don't mean to say," said Mr. Pickwick, gazing with solemn sternness at his friend, "you don't mean to say, Mr. Tupman, that it is your intention to put yourself into a green velvet jacket, with a two-inch tail?"

"Such *is* my intention, sir. And why not, sir?"

"Because, sir," said Mr. Pickwick, considerably excited, "because you are too old, sir."

"Too old!"

"And if any further ground of objection be wanting, you are too fat, sir."

"Sir," said Mr. Tupman, his face suffused with a crimson glow, "this is an insult."

"Sir," replied Mr. Pickwick in the same tone, "it is not half the insult to you that your appearance in my presence in a green velvet jacket, with a two-inch tail, would be to me."

"Sir," said Mr. Tupman, "you're a fellow."

"Sir," said Mr. Pickwick, "you're another!"

Mr. Tupman advanced a step or two, and glared at Mr. Pickwick. Mr. Pickwick returned the glare, concentrated into a focus by means of his spectacles, and breathed a bold defiance. Mr. Snodgrass and Mr. Winkle looked on, petrified at beholding such a scene between two such men.

"Sir," said Mr. Tupman, after a short pause, speaking in a low, deep voice, "you have called me old."

"I have," said Mr. Pickwick.

"And fat."

"I reiterate the charge."

"And a fellow."

"So you are!"

There was a fearful pause.

"My attachment to your person sir," said Mr. Tupman, speaking in a voice tremulous with emotion, and tucking up his wristbands meanwhile, "is very great—very great—but upon that person I must take summary vengeance."

"Come on, sir!" replied Mr. Pickwick. Stimulated by the exciting nature of the dialogue, the heroic man actually threw himself into a paralytic attitude, confidently supposed by the two bystanders to have been intended as a posture of defence.

"What!" exclaimed Mr. Snodgrass, suddenly recovering the power of speech, of which intense astonishment had previously bereft him, and rushing between the two, at the imminent hazard of receiving an application on the temple from each. "What! Mr. Pickwick, with the eyes of the world upon you! Mr. Tupman! who, in common with us all, derives a lustre from his undying name! For shame, gentlemen; for shame."

The unwonted lines which momentary passion had ruled in Mr. Pickwick's clear and open brow, gradually melted away, as his young friend spoke, like the marks of a black-lead pencil beneath the softening influence of india-rubber. His countenance had resumed its usual benign expression, ere he concluded.

"I have been hasty," said Mr. Pickwick, "very hasty. Tupman; your hand,"

The dark shadow passed from Mr. Tupman's face, as he warmly grasped the hand of his friend.

"I have been hasty, too," said he.

"No, no," interrupted Mr. Pickwick, "the fault was mine. You will wear the green velvet jacket?"

"No, no."

"To oblige me, you will."

"Well, well, I will."

It was accordingly settled that Mr. Tupman, Mr. Winkle, and Mr. Snodgrass, should all wear fancy dresses. Thus Mr. Pickwick was led by the very warmth of his own good feelings to give his consent to a proceeding from which his better judgment would have recoiled.

THE EATANSWILL ELECTION.

THE Eatanswill people, like the people of many other small towns, considered themselves of the utmost and most mighty importance, and every man in Eatanswill, conscious of the weight that attached to his example, felt himself bound to unite, heart and soul, with one of the two great parties that divided the town—the Blues and the Buffs. Now the Blues lost no opportunity of opposing the Buffs, and the Buffs lost no opportunity of opposing the Blues; and the consequence was, that whenever the Buffs and Blues met together disputes and high words arose between them.

There were two newspapers in the town—the *Eatanswill Gazette* and the *Eatanswill Independent*; the former advocating Blue principles, and the latter conducted on grounds decidedly Buff.

Mr. Pickwick, with his usual foresight and sagacity, had chosen a peculiarly desirable moment for his visit to the borough. Never was such a contest known. The Honourable Samuel Slumkey, of Slumkey Hall, was the Blue candidate; and Horatio Fizkin, Esq., of Fizkin Lodge, near Eatanswill, had been prevailed upon by his friends to stand forward on the Buff interest. Never had such a commotion agitated the town before.

It was late in the evening when Mr. Pickwick and his companions, assisted by Sam Weller, dismounted from the roof of the Eatanswill coach.

The Pickwickians had no sooner dismounted, than they were surrounded by a branch mob of the honest and independent.

“Slumkey for ever!” roared the honest and independent.

“Slumkey for ever!” echoed Mr. Pickwick, taking off his hat.

“Who is Slumkey?” whispered Mr. Tupman.

“I don’t know,” replied Mr. Pickwick in the same tone. “Hush! Don’t ask any questions. It’s always best on these occasions to do what the mob do.”

“But suppose there are two mobs?” suggested Mr. Snodgrass.

“Shout with the largest,” replied Mr. Pickwick.

Volumes could not have said more.

They entered the house, the crowd opening right and left to let them pass, and cheering vociferously. The first object of consideration was to secure quarters for the night.

Noise and bustle ushered in the next morning, that of the rapidly-approaching election.

"Well, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, as his valet appeared at his bed-room door, just as he was concluding his toilet; "all alive to-day, I suppose?"

"Reg'lar game, sir," replied Mr. Weller; "our people's a collecting down at the Town Arms, and they're a hollering themselves hoarse, already."

"Ah," said Mr. Pickwick, "do they seem devoted to their party, Sam?"

"Never see such dewotion in my life, sir."

"Energetic, eh?" said Mr. Pickwick.

"Uncommon," replied Sam; "I never see men eat and drink so much afore. I wonder they an't afeer'd o' bustin'."

"That's the mistaken kindness of the gentry here," said Mr. Pickwick.

"Wery likely," replied Sam, briefly.

"Fine, fresh, hearty fellows they seem," said Mr. Pickwick, glancing from the window.

"Wery fresh," replied Sam; "me and the two waiters at the Peacock, has been a pumpin' over the independent woters as supped there last night."

"Pumping over independent voters!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick.

"Yes," said his attendant, "every man slept vere he fell down; we dragged 'em out, one by one, this mornin', and put 'em under the pump, and they're in reg'lar fine order now. Shillin' a head the committee paid for that 'ere job."

"Can such things be?" exclaimed the astonished Mr. Pickwick.

"Bless your heart, sir," said Sam, "that's nothin,' that an't."

"Nothing?" said Mr. Pickwick.

"Nothin' at all, sir," replied his attendant. "The night afore the last day o' the last election here, the opposite party bribed the barmaid at the Town Arms, to hocus the brandy and water of fourteen unpolled electors as was a stoppin' in the house."

"What do you mean by 'hocussing' brandy and water?" inquired Mr. Pickwick.

"Puttin' laud'num in it," replied Sam. "Blessed if she didn't send 'em all to sleep till twelve hours arter the election was over. They took one man up to the booth, in a truck, fast asleep, by

way of experiment, but it was no go—they wouldn't poll him ; so they brought him back, and put him to bed again."

"Strange practices, these," said Mr. Pickwick ; half speaking to himself and half addressing Sam.

"Not half so strange as a miraculous circumstance as happened to my own father, at an election time, in this very place, sir," replied Sam.

"What was that?" inquired Mr. Pickwick.

"Why, he drove a coach down here once," said Sam ; "lection time came on, and he was engaged by vun party to bring down woters from London. Night afore he was agoing to drive up, committee on t'other side sends for him quietly, and away he goes with the messenger, who shows him in ;—large room—lots of gen'l'm'n—heaps of papers, pens and ink, and all that 'ere. 'Ah, Mr. Weller,' says the gen'l'm'n in the chair, 'glad to see you, sir ; how are you?'—'Wery well, thank'ee, sir,' says my father ; 'I hope *you're* pretty middlin,' says he,—'Pretty well, thank'ee sir,' says the gen'l'm'n ; 'sit down, Mr. Weller—pray sit down, sir.' So my father sits down, and he and the gen'l'm'n looks wery hard at each other. 'You don't remember me?' says the gen'l'm'n.—'Can't say I do,' says my father.—'Oh, I know you,' says the gen'l'm'n ; 'know'd you when you was a boy,' says he.—'Well, I don't remember you,' says my father.—'That's very odd,' says the gen'l'm'n.—'Wery,' says my father.—'You must have a bad mem'ry, Mr. Weller,' says the gen'l'm'n.—'Well, it is a wery bad 'un,' says my father.—'I thought so,' says the gen'l'm'n. So then they pours him out a glass of wine, and gammons him about his driving, and gets him into a reg'lar good humour, and at last shoves a twenty pound note in his hand. 'It's a wery bad road between this and London,' says the gen'l'm'n.—'Here and there it is a heavy road,' says my father.—'Specially near the canal, I think,' says the gen'l'm'n.—'Nasty bit that 'ere,' says my father.—'Well, Mr. Weller,' says the gen'l'm'n, 'you're a wery good whip, and can do what you like with your horses, we know. We're all wery fond o' you, Mr. Weller, so in case you *should* have an accident when you're a bringing these here woters down, and *should* tip 'em over into the canal vithout hurtin' of 'em, this is for yourself,' says he.—'Gen'l'm'n, you're wery kind,' says my father, 'and I'll drink your health in another glass of wine,' says he ; which he did, and then buttons up the money, and bows himself

out. You wouldn't believe, sir," continued Sam, with a look of inexpressible impudence at his master, "that on that wery day as he came down with them woters, his coach *was* upset on that 'ere wery spot, and ev'ry man on 'em was turned into the canal."

"And got out again?" inquired Mr. Pickwick, hastily.

"Why," replied Sam, very slowly, "I rather think one old gen'l'm'n was missin'; I know his hat was found, but I an't quite certain whether his head was in it or not. But what I look at, is the hex-traordinary, and wonderful coincidence, that arter what that gen'l'm'n said, my father's coach should be upset in that wery place, and on that wery day!"

"It is, no doubt, a very extraordinary circumstance indeed," said Mr. Pickwick. "But brush my hat, Sam, for I hear Mr. Winkle calling me to breakfast."

With these words Mr. Pickwick descended to the parlour, where he found breakfast laid, and the family already assembled. The meal was hastily despatched; each of the gentlemen's hats was decorated with an enormous blue favour.

The stable-yard exhibited unequivocal symptoms of the glory and strength of the Eatanswill Blues. There was a regular army of blue flags. There was a grand band of trumpets, bassoons and drums, marshalled four abreast, and earning their money, if ever men did, especially the drum-beaters, who were very muscular. There were bodies of constables with blue staves, twenty committee-men with blue scarfs, and a mob of voters with blue cockades. There were electors on horseback, and electors a-foot. There was an open carriage and four, for the Honourable Samuel Slumkey; and there were four carriages and pair, for his friends and supporters; and everybody and everything, then and there assembled, was for the special use, behoof, honour, and renown, of the Honourable Samuel Slumkey, of Slumkey Hall, one of the candidates for the representation of the Borough of Eatanswill, in the Commons House of Parliament of the United Kingdom.

Loud and long were the cheers, and mighty was the rustling of one of the blue flags, with "Liberty of the Press" inscribed thereon, when the sandy head of Mr. Pott, the "Blue" Editor, was discerned in one of the windows, by the mob beneath; and tremendous was the enthusiasm when the Honourable Samuel Slumkey himself, in topboots, and a blue neckerchief, advanced and seized the hand of

the said Pott, and melodramatically testified by gestures to the crowd his ineffaceable obligations to the *Eatanswill Gazette*.

"Is everything ready?" said the Honourable Samuel Slumkey to Mr. Perker, his agent.

"Everything, my dear sir," was the little man's reply.

"Nothing has been omitted, I hope?" said the Honourable Samuel Slumkey.

"Nothing has been left undone, my dear sir—nothing whatever. There are twenty washed men at the street door for you to shake hands with; and six children in arms that you're to pat on the head, and inquire the age of; be particular about the children, my dear sir,—it has always a great effect, that sort of thing."

"I'll take care," said the Honourable Samuel Slumkey.

"And, perhaps, my dear sir"—said the cautious little man, "perhaps if you *could*—I don't mean to say it's indispensable—but if you *could* manage to kiss one of 'em, it would produce a very great impression on the crowd."

"Wouldn't it have as good an effect if the proposer or seconder did that?" said the Honourable Samuel Slumkey.

"Why, I am afraid it wouldn't," replied the agent; "if it were done by yourself, my dear sir, I think it would make you very popular."

"Very well," said the Honourable Samuel Slumkey, with a resigned air, "then it must be done. That's all."

"Arrange the procession," cried the twenty committee-men.

Amidst the cheers of the assembled throng, the band, and the constables, and the committee-men, and the voters, and the horse-men, and the carriages, took their places—each of the two-horse vehicles being closely packed with as many gentlemen as could manage to stand upright in it; and that assigned to Mr. Perker, containing Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Tupman, Mr. Snodgrass, and about half a dozen of the committee beside.

There was a moment of awful suspense as the procession waited for the Honourable Samuel Slumkey to step into his carriage. Suddenly the crowd set up a great cheering.

"He has come out," said little Mr. Perker, greatly excited; the more so as their position did not enable them to see what was going forward.

Another cheer, much louder.

"He has shaken hands with the men," cried the little agent.

Another cheer, far more vehement.

"He has patted the babies on the head," said Mr. Perker, trembling with anxiety.

A roar of applause that rent the air.

"He has kissed one of 'em!" exclaimed the delighted little man.

A second roar.

"He has kissed another," gasped the excited manager.

A third roar.

"He's kissing 'em all!" screamed the enthusiastic little gentleman. And hailed by the deafening shouts of the multitude, the procession moved on.

How or by what means it became mixed up with the other procession, and how it was ever extricated from the confusion consequent thereupon, is more than we can undertake to describe. Mr. Pickwick felt himself forced up some wooden steps by the persons from behind; and on removing his hat, found himself surrounded by his friends, in the very front of the left hand side of the hustings. The right was reserved for the Buff party, and the centre for the Mayor and his officers; one of whom—the fat crier of Eatanswill—was ringing an enormous bell, by way of commanding silence, while Mr. Horatio Fizkin, and the Honourable Samuel Slumkey, with their hands upon their hearts, were bowing with the utmost affability to the troubled sea of heads that inundated the open space in front; and from whence arose a storm of groans, and shouts, and yells, and hootings, that would have done honour to an earthquake.

"Silence!" roared the Mayor's attendants.

"Whiffin, proclaim silence," said the Mayor, with an air of pomp befitting his lofty station. In obedience to this command the crier performed another concerto on the bell, whereupon a gentleman in the crowd called out "muffins;" which occasioned another laugh.

"Gentlemen," said the Mayor, at as loud a pitch as he could possibly force his voice to, "Gentlemen. Brother electors of the Borough of Eatanswill. We are met here to-day for the purpose of choosing a representative in the room of our late——"

Here the Mayor was interrupted by a voice in the crowd.

"Suc-cess to the Mayor!" cried the voice, "and may he never desert the nail and sarspan business, as he got his money by."

This allusion to the professional pursuits of the orator was re-

ceived with a storm of delight, which, with a bell-accompaniment, rendered the remainder of his speech inaudible, with the exception of the concluding sentence, in which he thanked the meeting for the patient attention with which they had heard him throughout,—an expression of gratitude which elicited another burst of mirth, of about a quarter of an hour's duration.

Next, a tall thin gentleman, in a very stiff white neckherchief, after being repeatedly desired by the crowd to "send a boy home, to ask whether he hadn't left his voice under the pillow," begged to nominate a fit and proper person to represent them in Parliament. And when he said it was Horatio Fizkin, Esquire, of Fizkin Lodge, near Eatanswill, the Fizkinites applauded, and the Slumkeyites groaned, so long, and so loudly, that both he and the seconder might have sung comic songs in lieu of speaking, without anybody's being a bit the wiser.

The friends of Horatio Fizkin, Esquire, having had their innings, a little choleric, pink-faced man stood forward to propose another fit and proper person to represent the electors of Eatanswill in Parliament; and very swimmingly the pink-faced gentleman would have got on, if he had not been rather too choleric to entertain a sufficient perception of the fun of the crowd. But after a very few sentences of figurative eloquence, the pink-faced gentleman got from denouncing those who interrupted him in the mob, to exchanging defiances with the gentlemen on the hustings; whereupon arose an uproar which reduced him to the necessity of expressing his feelings by serious pantomime, which he did, and then left the stage to his seconder, who delivered a written speech of half an hour's length, and wouldn't be stopped, because he had sent it all to the *Eatanswill Gazette*, and the *Eatanswill Gazette* had already printed it, every word.

Then Horatio Fizkin, Esquire, of Fizkin Lodge, near Eatanswill, presented himself for the purpose of addressing the electors; which he no sooner did, than the band employed by the Honourable Samuel Slumkey, commenced performing with a power to which their strength in the morning was a trifle; in return for which, the Buff crowd belaboured the heads and shoulders of the Blue crowd; on which the Blue crowd endeavoured to dispossess themselves of their very unpleasant neighbours the Buff crowd; and a scene of struggling, and pushing, and fighting succeeded, to which we can no more do justice than the Mayor could, although he issued im-

perative orders to twelve constables to seize the ringleaders, who might amount in number to two hundred and fifty, or thereabouts. At all these encounters, Horatio Fizkin, Esquire, of Fizkin Lodge, and his friends, waxed fierce and furious; until at last Horatio Fizkin, Esquire, of Fizkin Lodge, begged to ask his opponent the Honourable Samuel Slumkey, of Slumkey Hall, whether that band played by his consent; which question the Honourable Samuel Slumkey declining to answer, Horatio Fizkin, Esquire, of Fizkin Lodge, shook his fist in the countenance of the Honourable Samuel Slumkey, of Slumkey Hall; upon which the Honourable Samuel Slumkey, his blood being up, defied Horatio Fizkin, Esquire, to mortal combat. At this violation of all known rules and precedents of order, the Mayor commanded another fantasia on the bell, and declared that he would bring before himself both Horatio Fizkin, Esquire, of Fizkin Lodge, and the Honourable Samuel Slumkey, of Slumkey Hall, and bind them over to keep the peace. Upon this terrific denunciation, the supporters of the two candidates interfered, and after the friends of each party had quarrelled in pairs for three-quarters of an hour, Horatio Fizkin, Esquire, touched his hat to the Honourable Samuel Slumkey; the Honourable Samuel Slumkey touched his to Horatio Fizkin, Esquire; the band was stopped; the crowd were partially quieted; and Horatio Fizkin, Esquire, was permitted to proceed.

The speeches of the two candidates, though differing in every other respect, afforded a beautiful tribute to the merit and high worth of the electors of Eatanswill. Both expressed their opinion that a more independent, a more enlightened, a more public-spirited, a more noble-minded, a more disinterested set of men than those who had promised to vote for him, never existed on earth; each darkly hinted his suspicions that the electors in the opposite interest had certain swinish and besotted infirmities which rendered them unfit for the exercise of the important duties they were called upon to discharge. Fizkin expressed his readiness to do anything he was wanted; Slumkey, his determination to do nothing that was asked of him. Both said that the trade, the manufactures, the commerce, the prosperity of Eatanswill, would ever be dearer to their hearts than any earthly object: and each had it in his power to state, with the utmost confidence, that he was the man who would eventually be returned.

There was a show of hands; the Mayor decided in favour of the

Honourable Samuel Slumkey, of Slumkey Hall. Horatio Fizkin, Esquire, of Fizkin Lodge, demanded a poll, and a poll was fixed accordingly. Then a vote of thanks was moved to the Mayor for his able conduct in the chair; and the Mayor devoutly wishing that he had had a chair to display his able conduct in (for he had been standing during the whole proceedings), returned thanks. The processions re-formed, the carriages rolled slowly through the crowd, and its members screeched and shouted after them as their feelings or caprice dictated.

During the whole time of the polling, the town was in a perpetual fever of excitement. Everything was conducted on the most liberal and delightful scale. Exciseable articles were remarkably cheap at all the public-houses; and spring vans paraded the streets for the accommodation of voters who were seized with any temporary dizziness in the head—an epidemic which prevailed among the electors, during the contest, to a most alarming extent, and under the influence of which they might frequently be seen lying on the pavements in a state of utter insensibility. A small body of electors remained unpollled on the very last day. They were calculating and reflecting persons, who had not yet been convinced by the arguments of either party, although they had had frequent conferences with each. One hour before the close of the poll, Mr. Perker solicited the honour of a private interview with these intelligent, these noble, these patriotic men. It was granted. His arguments were brief, but satisfactory. They went in a body to the poll; and when they returned, the Honourable Samuel Slumkey, of Slumkey Hall, was returned also.

HORATIO SPARKINS.

(Condensed.)

"INDEED, my love, he paid Teresa very great attention on the last assembly night," said Mrs. Malderton, addressing her spouse, "very great attention; and I say again, every possible encouragement ought to be given him. He positively must be asked down here to dine."

"Who must?" inquired Mr. Malderton.

"Why, you know whom I mean, my dear—the young man with

the black whiskers and the white cravat, who has just come out at our assembly, and whom all the girls are talking about. Young—— Dear me! what's his name?—Marianne, what is his name?" continued Mrs. Malderton, addressing her youngest daughter.

"Mr. Horatio Sparkins, Ma," replied Miss Marianne with a sigh.

"Oh, yes, to be sure! Horatio Sparkins. Decidedly the most gentleman-like young man I ever saw. I am sure, in the beautifully-made coat he wore the other night, he looked like—like——"

"Like Prince Leopold, Ma—so noble, so full of sentiment!"

"You should recollect, my dear, that Teresa is now eight-and-twenty; and that it really is very important that something should be done."

Miss Teresa Malderton was a very little girl, rather fat, with vermillion cheeks, but good-humoured, and still disengaged, although, to do her justice, the misfortune arose from no lack of perseverance on her part. Miss Malderton was as well known as the lion on the top of Northumberland House, and had an equal chance of "going off."

"I am quite sure you'd like him, he is so gentlemanly! And has a great respect for you, my dear," said Mrs. Malderton to her husband.

"Well, well," returned Mr. Malderton, somewhat flattered; "if I see him at the assembly to-morrow, perhaps I'll ask him down. I hope he knows we live at Oak Lodge, Camberwell, my dear?"

"Of course—and that you keep a one-horse carriage."

"I'll see about it," said Mr. Malderton; "I'll see about it."

The appearance of Mr. Horatio Sparkins at the assembly had excited no small degree of surprise and curiosity among its regular frequenters. Who could he be? He was evidently reserved, and apparently melancholy. Was he a clergyman?—He danced too well. A barrister?—He said he was not called. He used very fine words, and talked a great deal. "Then," said everybody, "he must be *somebody*."—"I should think he must be," reasoned Mr. Malderton within himself, "because he perceives our superiority, and pays us so much attention."

The night succeeding the conversation we have just recorded was "assembly night," and the first object that met the anxious eyes of the expectant family, on their entrance into the ball-room, was the interesting Horatio, with his hair brushed off his forehead,

and his eyes fixed on the ceiling, reclining in a contemplative attitude on one of the seats.

"There he is, my dear," whispered Mrs. Malderton to Mr. Malderton.

"How like Lord Byron!" murmured Miss Teresa.

"Or the portraits of Captain Cook!" suggested Tom.

"Tom, don't be an ass!" said his father, who checked him on all occasions, probably with a view to prevent his becoming "sharp"—which was very unnecessary.

The elegant Sparkins attitudinised with admirable effect, until the family had crossed the room. He then started up with the most natural appearance of surprise and delight; accosted Mrs. Malderton with the utmost cordiality; saluted the young ladies in the most enchanting manner; and bowed to, and shook hands with, Mr. Malderton, with a degree of respect amounting almost to veneration.

"Miss Malderton," said Horatio, bowing very low, "may I be permitted to presume to hope that you will allow me to have the pleasure——"

"I don't *think* I am engaged," said Miss Teresa with a dreadful affectation of indifference—"but, really—so many——"

Horatio looked as handsomely miserable as a Hamlet sliding upon a bit of orange peel.

"I shall be most happy," simpered the interesting Teresa at last. Horatio's countenance brightened up, like an old hat in a shower of rain.

"A very genteel young man, certainly!" said the gratified Mr. Malderton, as the obsequious Sparkins and his partner joined the quadrille which was just forming.

"He has a remarkably good address," said Mr. Frederick.

"Yes, he is a prime fellow," interposed Tom, who always managed to put his foot in it—"he talks just like an auctioneer."

"Tom," said his father solemnly, "I think I desired you before not to be a fool." Tom looked as happy as a cock on a drizzly morning.

"How delightful!" said the interesting Horatio to his partner, as they promenaded the room at the conclusion of the set—"how delightful, how refreshing it is, to retire from the cloudy storms, the vicissitudes, and the troubles of life, even if it be but for a few short fleeting moments; and to spend those moments, fading and

evanescent though they be, in the delightful society of one individual—whose frowns would be death, whose coldness would be madness, whose falsehood would be ruin, whose constancy would be bliss; the possession of whose affection would be the brightest and best reward that Heaven could bestow on man!”

“What feeling! what sentiment!” thought Miss Teresa.

“But enough—enough!” resumed the elegant Sparkins. “What have I said? what have I—I—to do with sentiments like these? Miss Malderton—may I hope to be permitted to offer the humble tribute of——”

“Really, Mr. Sparkins,” returned the enraptured Miss Teresa, “I must refer you to Papa. I never can, without his consent, venture to——”

“Surely he cannot object——”

“Oh yes! Indeed, indeed, you know him not!” interrupted Miss Teresa, well knowing there was nothing to fear, but wishing to make the interview resemble a scene in some romantic novel.

“He cannot object to my offering you a glass of negus,” returned the adorable Sparkins with some surprise.

“Is that all?” thought the disappointed Teresa. “What a fuss about nothing!”

“It will give me the greatest pleasure, sir, to see you to dinner at Oak Lodge, Camberwell, on Sunday next at five o’clock, if you have no better engagement,” said Mr. Malderton, at the conclusion of the evening, as he and his sons were standing in conversation with Mr. Horatio Sparkins.

Horatio bowed his acknowledgements, and accepted the flattering invitation.

“I must confess,” continued the father, offering his snuff-box to his new acquaintance, “that I don’t enjoy these assemblies half so much as the comfort—I had almost said the luxury—of Oak Lodge. They have no great charms for an elderly man.”

“And after all, sir, what is man?” said the metaphysical Sparkins. “I say, what is man?”

“Ah! very true,” said Mr. Malderton; very true.”

“We know that we live and breathe,” continued Horatio, “that we have wants and wishes, desires and appetites—I say, we know that we exist, but there we stop; there, is an end to our knowledge; there, is the summit of our attainments; there, is the termination of our ends. What more do we know?”

"Nothing," replied Mr. Frederick—than whom no one was more capable of answering for himself in that particular.

Various surmises were hazarded, on the eventful morning, as to the mode of conveyance which the anxiously-expected Horatio would adopt.

"Upon my word, my dear, it's a most annoying thing that that vulgar brother of yours should have invited himself to dine here to-day," said Mr. Malderton to his wife. "On account of Mr. Sparkins's coming down, I purposely abstained from asking anyone but Flamwell. And then to think of your brother—a tradesman—it's insufferable! I declare I wouldn't have him mention his shop before our new guest—no, not for a thousand pounds! I wouldn't care if he had the good sense to conceal the disgrace he is to the family; but he's so fond of his horrible business, that he *will* let people know what he is."

Mr. Jacob Barton, the individual alluded to, was a large grocer; so vulgar, and so lost to all sense of feeling, that he actually never scrupled to avow that he wasn't above his business: "he'd made his money by it, and he didn't care who knewed it."

"Ah, Flamwell, my dear fellow, how d'ye do?" said Mr. Malderton as a little spoofish man, with green spectacles, entered the room. "You got my note?"

"Yes, I did; and here I am in consequence."

"You don't happen to know this Mr. Sparkins by name? You know everybody."

Mr. Flamwell was one of those gentlemen who pretend to know everybody, but in reality know nobody.

"Why, no, I don't know him by that name," returned Flamwell. "I have no doubt I know him, though. Is he tall?"

"Middle-sized," said Miss Teresa.

"With black hair?" inquired Flamwell, hazarding a bold guess.

"Yes."

"Rather a snub nose?"

"No, he has a Roman nose."

"I said a Roman nose, didn't I? He's an elegant young man?"

"Oh, certainly!"

"With remarkably prepossessing manners?"

"Oh yes!" said all the family together. "You must know him."

"Yes, I thought you knew him, if he was anybody," triumphantly exclaimed Mr. Malderton. "Who d'ye think he is?"

"Why, from your description," said Flamwell, ruminating, and sinking his voice almost to a whisper, "he bears a strong resemblance to the Honourable Augustus Fitz-Edward Fitz-John Fitz-Osborne. He's a very talented young man, and rather eccentric. It's extremely probable he may have changed his name for some temporary purpose."

Teresa's heart beat high. Could he be the Honourable Augustus Fitz-Edward Fitz-John Fitz-Osborne? What a name to be elegantly engraved upon two glazed cards, tied together with a piece of white satin ribbon! "The Honourable Mrs. Augustus Fitz-Edward Fitz-John Fitz-Osborne!" The thought was transport.

"There he is!" exclaimed Miss Teresa as a loud double knock was heard at the door.

The room-door opened. "Mr. Barton!" said the servant.

"Here's Mr. Sparkins!" said Tom, who had been looking out at the window, "on *such* a black horse!" The ceremony of introduction was gone through in all due form.

"Is he the Honourable Mr. Augustus What's-his-name?" whispered Mrs. Malderton to Flamwell as he was escorting her to the diningroom.

"Why, no—at least, not exactly," returned that great authority—"not exactly."

"Mr. Sparkins," said the delighted Mrs. Malderton, "pray divide the ladies."

The dinner was excellent; Horatio was most attentive to Miss Teresa, and every one felt in high spirits, except Mr. Malderton, who, knowing the propensity of his brother-in-law, Mr. Barton, endured that sort of agony which the newspapers inform us is experienced by the surrounding neighbourhood when a potboy hangs himself in a hayloft, and which is "much easier to be imagined than described."

"Have you seen your friend, Sir Thomas Noland, lately, Flamwell?" inquired Mr. Malderton, casting a sidelong look at Horatio, to see what effect the mention of so great a man had upon him.

"Why, no—not very lately. I saw Lord Gubbleton the day before yesterday. I met him in the City, and had a long chat with him. Indeed, I'm rather intimate with him. I couldn't stop to talk to him as long as I could wish, though, because I was

on my way to a banker's, a very rich man, and a Member of Parliament, with whom I am also rather, indeed I may say very, intimate."

"I know whom you mean," returned the host consequentially. "He has a capital business."

This was touching on a dangerous topic.

"Talking of business," interposed Mr. Barton from the centre of the table, "a gentleman whom you knew very well, Malderton, before you made that first lucky spec of yours, called at our shop the other day, and——"

"Barton, may I trouble you for a potato?"

"Certainly," returned the grocer, quite insensible of his brother-in-law's object—"and he said in a very plain manner——"

"*Floury*, if you please," interrupted Malderton again.

"He said, says he, how goes on your business? So I said, jokingly—you know my way—says I, I'm never above my business, and I hope my business will never be above me. Ha, ha!"

"Mr. Sparkins," said the host, vainly endeavouring to conceal his dismay, "a glass of wine?"

"With the utmost pleasure, sir."

"Happy to see you."

"Thank you."

"We were talking the other evening," resumed the host, addressing Horatio—"we were talking the other night about the nature of man. Your argument struck me very forcibly."

"Pray what is your opinion of woman, Mr. Sparkins?" inquired Mrs. Malderton. The young ladies simpered.

"Man," replied Horatio, "man, whether he ranged the bright, gay, flowery plains of a second Eden, or the more sterile, barren, and I may say commonplace regions to which we are compelled to accustom ourselves, in times such as these; man under any circumstance, or in any place—whether he was bending beneath the withering blasts of the frigid zone, or scorching under the rays of a vertical sun—man, without woman, would be—alone."

The remainder of the evening passed away most delightfully, and it was past twelve o'clock before Mr. Sparkins ordered the mourning-coach-looking steed to be brought out—an order which was only complied with, on the distinct understanding that he was to repeat his visit.

"But, perhaps Mr. Sparkins will form one of our party to-

morrow evening?" suggested Mrs. M. "Mr. Malderton intends taking the girls to see the pantomime." Mr. Sparkins bowed, and promised to join the party.

"We will not tax you for the morning," said Miss Teresa, bewitchingly; "for Ma is going to take us to all sorts of places, shopping. I know that gentlemen have a great horror of that employment." Mr. Sparkins bowed again, and declared that he should be delighted, but business of importance occupied him in the morning. Flamwell looked at Malderton significantly—"It's term-time!" he whispered.

At twelve o'clock on the following morning, the "fly" was at the door of Oak Lodge, to convey Mrs. Malderton and her daughters on their expedition for the day. They departed on their first errand to make some purchases at Messrs. Jones, Spruggins, and Smith's, of Tottenham Court Road. At length the vehicle stopped before a dirty-looking ticketed linendraper's shop, with goods of all kinds, and labels of all sorts and sizes in the window. There were dropsical figures of seven with a little three-farthings in the corner, "perfectly invisible to the naked eye;" three hundred and fifty thousand ladies boas, *from* one shilling and a penny halfpenny; real French kid shoes, at two-and-ninepence per pair; green parasols, at an equally cheap rate; and "every description of goods," as the proprietors said—and they must know best—"fifty per cent. under cost price."

"Oh, Ma, what a place you have brought us to!" said Miss Teresa. "What *would* Mr. Sparkins say if he could see us?"

"Ah! what, indeed!" said Miss Marianne, horrified at the idea.

"Pray, be seated, ladies. What is the first article?" inquired the obsequious master of the ceremonies of the establishment.

"I want to see some silks," answered Mrs. Malderton.

"Directly, ma'am.—Mr. Smith! Where is Mr. Smith?"

"Here, sir!" cried a voice at the back of the shop.

"Pray make haste, Mr. Smith. You never are to be found when you're wanted, sir."

Mr. Smith, thus enjoined to use all possible despatch, leaped over the counter with great agility, and placed himself before the newly-arrived customers. Mrs. Malderton uttered a faint scream; Miss Teresa, who had been stooping down to talk to her sister, raised her head, and beheld—Horatio Sparkins!

THE FOUR SISTERS.

(Condensed.)

THE four Miss Willises settled in our parish thirteen years ago. It is a melancholy reflection that the old adage, "Time and tide wait for no man," applies with equal force to the fairer portion of the creation; and willingly would we conceal the fact that, even thirteen years ago, the Miss Willises were far from juvenile. Thirteen years since, the authorities in matrimonial cases considered the youngest Miss Willis in a very precarious state, while the eldest sister was positively given over, as being far beyond all human hope. Well, the Miss Willises took a lease of the house. The house-carpenters made confidential statements to the different maid-servants in the row, relative to the magnificent scale on which the Miss Willises were commencing; the maid-servants told their "Missises," the Missises told their friends, and vague rumours were circulated throughout the parish that No. 25, in Gordon Place, had been taken by four maiden ladies of immense property.

At last the Miss Willises moved in; and then the "calling" began. The house was the perfection of neatness—so were the four Miss Willises. Everything was formal, stiff, and cold—so were the four Miss Willises. Not a single chair of the whole set was ever seen out of its place—not a single Miss Willis of the whole four was ever seen out of hers. There they always sat, in the same places, doing precisely the same things at the same hour. The eldest Miss Willis used to knit, the second to draw, the two others to play duets on the piano. They seemed to have no separate existence, but to have made up their minds just to winter through life together. They were three long graces in drapery, with the addition, like a school dinner, of another long grace afterwards—the three fates with another sister—the Siamese twins multiplied by two. The eldest Miss Willis grew bilious—the four Miss Willises grew bilious immediately. The eldest Miss Willis grew ill-tempered and religious—the four Miss Willises were ill-tempered and religious directly. Whatever the eldest did the others did, and whatever anybody else did they all disapproved

of; and thus they vegetated—living in Polar harmony among themselves, and, as they sometimes went out, or saw company “in a quiet way” at home, occasionally icing the neighbours. Three years passed over in this way, when an unlooked-for and extraordinary phenomenon occurred. The Miss Willises showed symptoms of summer; the frost gradually broke up; a complete thaw took place. Was it possible? One of the four Miss Willises was going to be married!

Now, where on earth the husband came from, by what feelings the poor man could have been actuated, or by what process of reasoning the four Miss Willises succeeded in persuading themselves that it was possible for a man to marry one of them without marrying them all, are questions too profound for us to resolve: certain it is, however, that the visits of Mr. Robinson (a gentleman in a public office, with a good salary and a little property of his own beside) were received—that the four Miss Willises were courted in due form by the said Mr. Robinson—that the neighbours were perfectly frantic in their anxiety to discover which of the four Miss Willises was the fortunate fair, and that the difficulty they experienced in solving the problem was not at all lessened by the announcement of the eldest Miss Willis—“*We are going to marry Mr. Robinson.*”

It was very extraordinary. They were so completely identified, the one with the other, that the curiosity of the whole row—even of the old lady herself—was roused almost beyond endurance. The subject was discussed at every little card-table and tea-drinking. The old gentleman of silk-worm notoriety did not hesitate to express his decided opinion that Mr. Robinson was of Eastern descent, and contemplated marrying the whole family at once. They hoped it might all end well; it certainly had a very singular appearance, but still it would be uncharitable to express any opinion without good grounds to go upon, and certainly the Miss Willises were *quite* old enough to judge for themselves. At last, one fine morning, at a quarter before eight o'clock, A.M., two glass-coaches drove up to the Miss Willises' door, at which Mr. Robinson had arrived in a cab ten minutes before.

The intelligence spread rapidly from house to house. It was quite clear that the eventful morning had at length arrived; the whole row stationed themselves behind their first and second floor blinds, and waited the result in breathless expectation.

At last the Miss Willises' door opened; the door of the first glass-coach did the same. Two gentlemen and a pair of ladies to correspond—friends of the family, no doubt; up went the steps, bang went the door, off went the first glass-coach, and up came the second.

The street-door again opened; the excitement of the whole row increased—Mr. Robinson and the eldest Miss Willis. "I thought so," said the lady at No. 19; "I always said it was *Miss Willis!*" "Well, I never!" ejaculated the young lady at No. 18 to the young lady at No. 17. "Did you ever, dear?" responded the young lady at No. 17 to the young lady at No. 18. "It's too ridiculous!" exclaimed a spinster of an *uncertain* age at No. 16, joining in the conversation. But who shall portray the astonishment of Gordon Place when Mr. Robinson handed in *all* the Miss Willises, one after another, and then squeezed himself into an acute angle of the glass-coach, which forthwith proceeded at a brisk pace after the other glass-coach, which other glass-coach had itself proceeded at a brisk pace in the direction of the parish church? Who shall depict the perplexity of the clergyman when *all* the Miss Willises knelt down at the communion table, and repeated the responses incidental to the marriage service in an audible voice—or who shall describe the confusion which prevailed when—even after the difficulties thus occasioned had been adjusted—*all* the Miss Willises went into hysterics at the conclusion of the ceremony, until the sacred edifice resounded with their united wailings?

As the four sisters and Mr. Robinson continued to occupy the same house after this memorable occasion, and as the married sister, whoever she was, never appeared in public without the other three, we are not quite clear that the neighbours ever would have discovered the real Mrs. Robinson but for a circumstance of the most gratifying description, which *will* happen occasionally in the best regulated families. Three quarter-days elapsed, and the row, on whom a new light appeared to have been bursting for some time, began to speak with an implied confidence on the subject, and to wonder how Mrs. Robinson—the youngest Miss Willis that was—got on; and servants might be seen running up the steps, about nine or ten o'clock every morning, with "Missis's compliments, and wishes to know how Mrs. Robinson finds herself this morning?" And the answer always was, "Mrs. Robinson's compliments, and she's in

very good spirits, and doesn't find herself any worse." The piano was heard no longer, the knitting needles were laid aside, drawing was neglected, and mantua-making and millinery, on the smallest scale imaginable, appeared to have become the favourite amusement of the whole family. The parlour wasn't quite as tidy as it used to be, and, if you called in the morning, you would see lying on a table, with an old newspaper carelessly thrown over them, two or three particularly small caps, rather larger than if they had been made for a moderate-sized doll, with a small piece of lace, in the shape of a horse-shoe, let in behind; or perhaps a white robe, not very large in circumference, but very much out of proportion in point of length, with a little tucker round the top, and a frill round the bottom; and once we were very much alarmed by hearing a hackney coach stop at Mrs. Robinson's door at half-past two in the morning, out of which there emerged a fat old woman, in a cloak and nightcap, with a bundle in one hand and a pair of pattens in the other, who looked as if she had been suddenly knocked up out of bed for some very special purpose.

When we got up in the morning we saw that the knocker was tied up in an old white kid glove; and we, in our innocence (we were in a state of bachelorship then), wondered what on earth it all meant, until we heard the eldest Miss Willis, *in propria personâ*, say, with great dignity, in answer to the next inquiry, "*My compliments, and Mrs. Robinson's doing as well as can be expected, and the little girl thrives wonderfully.*" And then, in common with the rest of the row, our curiosity was satisfied, and we began to wonder it had never occurred to us what the matter was before.

THE STORY OF RICHARD DOUBLEDICK.

IN TWO PARTS.

(Condensed).

PART I.

IN the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-nine, a relative of mine came limping down, on foot, to Chatham. There was no cavalry at Chatham when he limped over the bridge, with half a shoe to his dusty feet, so he enlisted into a regiment of the line, and was glad to get drunk and forget all about it.

You are to know that this relative of mine had gone wrong and run wild. His heart was in the right place, but it was sealed up. He had been betrothed to a good and beautiful girl, whom he had loved better than she—or perhaps even he—believed; but in an evil hour he had given her cause to say to him solemnly, “Richard, I will never marry another man. I will live single for your sake, but Mary Marshall’s lips”—her name was Mary Marshall—“shall never address another word to you on earth. Go, Richard! Heaven forgive you!” This finished him. This brought him down to Chatham. This made him Private Richard Doubledick, with a determination to be shot.

There was not a more dissipated and reckless soldier in Chatham barracks, in the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-nine, than Private Richard Doubledick. It became clear to the whole barracks that Private Richard Doubledick would very soon be flogged.

Now the Captain of Richard Doubledick’s company was a young gentleman not above five years his senior, whose eyes had an expression in them which affected Private Richard Doubledick in a very remarkable way. They were the only eyes now left in his narrowed world that Private Richard Doubledick could not stand. He could not so much as salute Captain Taunton in the street like any other officer. In his worst moments, he would rather turn back, and go any distance out of his way, than encounter those two handsome, dark, bright eyes.

One day, when Private Richard Doubledick came out of the black-hole, he was ordered to betake himself to Captain Taunton's quarters.

"Come in!" cried the Captain, when he knocked with his knuckles at the door. Private Richard Doubledick pulled off his cap, took a stride forward, and felt very conscious that he stood in the light of the dark, bright eyes.

There was a silent pause.

"Doubledick, do you know where you are going to?"

"To the devil, sir."

"Yes; and very fast. Doubledick, since I entered his Majesty's service, a boy of seventeen, I have been pained to see many men of promise going that road; but I have never been so pained to see a man determined to make the shameful journey as I have been, ever since you joined the regiment, to see you."

Private Richard Doubledick began to find the legs of the Captain's breakfast-table turning crooked, as if he saw them through water.

"I am only a common soldier, sir," said he. "It signifies very little what such a poor brute comes to."

"You are a man of education and superior advantages; and if you say that, meaning what you say, you have sunk lower than I had believed. How low that must be, I leave you to consider, knowing what I know of your disgrace, and seeing what I see."

"I hope to get shot soon, sir; and then the regiment and the world together will be rid of me."

The legs of the table were becoming very crooked. Doubledick, looking up to steady his vision, met the eyes that had so strong an influence over him. He put his hand before his own eyes, and the breast of his disgrace-jacket swelled as if it would fly asunder.

"I would rather see this in you, Doubledick, than I would see five thousand guineas counted out upon this table for a gift to my good mother. Have you a mother?"

"I am thankful to say she is dead, sir."

"If your praises were sounded from mouth to mouth through the whole regiment, through the whole army, through the whole country, you would wish she had lived to say, with pride and joy, 'He is my son!'"

"Spare me, sir. She would never have heard any good of me. She would never have had any pride and joy in owning herself my mother. Love and compassion she might have had, and

would have always had, I know ; but not—Spare me, sir ! I am a broken wretch, quite at your mercy !” And he turned his face to the wall, and stretched out his imploring hand.

“My friend—” began the Captain.

“God bless you, sir !” sobbed Private Richard Doubledick.

“You are at the crisis of your fate. Hold your course unchanged a little longer, and you know what must happen. I know, even better than you can imagine, that, after that has happened, you are lost. No man who could shed those tears could bear those marks.”

“I fully believe it, sir,” in a low, shivering voice, said Private Richard Doubledick.

“But a man in any station can do his duty, and, in doing it, can earn his own respect, even if his case should be so very unfortunate and so very rare that he can earn no other man’s. A common soldier, poor brute though you called him just now, has this advantage in the stormy times we live in, that he always does his duty before a host of sympathising witnesses. Do you doubt that he may so do it as to be extolled through a whole regiment, through a whole army, through a whole country ? Turn, while you may yet retrieve the past, and try.”

“I will ! I ask for only one witness, sir.”

“I understand you. I will be a watchful and a faithful one.”

I have heard from Private Richard Doubledick’s own lips, that he dropped down upon his knee, kissed that officer’s hand, arose, and went out of the light of the dark, bright eyes, an altered man.

In that year, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-nine, the French were in Egypt, in Italy, in Germany—where not ? Napoleon Bonaparte had likewise begun to stir against us in India, and most men could read the signs of the great troubles that were coming on. In the very next year, when we formed an alliance with Austria against him, Captain Taunton’s regiment was on service in India. And there was not a finer non-commissioned officer in it—no, nor in the whole line—than *Corporal* Richard Doubledick.

In eighteen hundred and one, the Indian army were on the coast of Egypt. Next year was the year of the proclamation of the short peace, and they were recalled. It had then become well known to thousands of men that wherever Captain Taunton, with the dark, bright eyes, led, there, close to him, ever at his side, firm as a rock, true as the sun, and brave as Mars, would be certain

to be found, while life beat in their hearts, that famous soldier, *Sergeant Richard Doubledick*.

Eighteen hundred and five, besides being the great year of Trafalgar, was a year of hard fighting in India. That year saw such wonders done by a Sergeant-Major, who cut his way single-handed through a solid mass of men, recovered the colours of his regiment, which had been seized from the hand of a poor boy shot through the heart, and rescued his wounded Captain, who was down, and in a very jungle of horses' hoofs and sabres—saw such wonders done, I say, by this brave Sergeant-Major, that he was specially made the bearer of the colours he had won; and *Ensign Richard Doubledick* had risen from the ranks.

Sorely cut up in every battle, but always reinforced by the bravest of men—for the fame of following the old colours, shot through and through, which *Ensign Richard Doubledick* had saved, inspired all breasts—this regiment fought its way through the Peninsular war, up to the investment of Badajos in eighteen hundred and twelve. Again and again it had been cheered through the British ranks until the tears had sprung into men's eyes at the mere hearing of the mighty British voice, so exultant in their valour; and there was not a drummer-boy but knew the legend, that wherever the two friends, Major Taunton, with the dark, bright eyes, and *Ensign Richard Doubledick*, who was devoted to him, were seen to go, there the boldest spirits in the English army became wild to follow.

One day, at Badajos—not in the great storming, but in repelling a hot sally of the besieged upon our men at work in the trenches, who had given way—the two officers found themselves hurrying forward, face to face, against a party of French infantry, who made a stand. There was an officer at their head, encouraging his men—a courageous, handsome, gallant officer of five-and-thirty, whom *Doubledick* saw hurriedly, almost momentarily, but saw well. He particularly noticed this officer waving his sword, and rallying his men with an eager and excited cry, when they fired in obedience to his gesture, and Major Taunton dropped.

It was over in ten minutes more, and *Doubledick* returned to the spot where he had laid the best friend man ever had, on a coat spread upon the wet clay. Major Taunton's uniform was opened at the breast, and on his shirt were three little spots of blood.

"Dear *Doubledick*," said he, "I am dying."

"For the love of Heaven, no!" exclaimed the other, kneeling down beside him, and passing his arm round his neck to raise his head. "Taunton! My preserver, my guardian angel, my witness! Dearest, truest, kindest of human beings! Taunton!"

The bright, dark eyes—so very, very dark now, in the pale face—smiled upon him; and the hand he had kissed thirteen years ago laid itself fondly on his breast.

"Write to my mother. You will see Home again. Tell her how we became friends. It will comfort her, as it comforts me."

He spoke no more, but faintly signed for a moment towards his hair as it fluttered in the wind. The Ensign understood him. He smiled again when he saw that, and, gently turning his face over on the supporting arm as if for rest, died, with his hand upon the breast in which he had revived a soul.

No dry eye looked on Ensign Richard Doubledick that melancholy day. He buried his friend on the field, and became a lone, bereaved man. Beyond his duty he appeared to have but two remaining cares in life—one, to preserve the little packet of hair he was to give to Taunton's mother—the other, to encounter that French officer who had rallied the men under whose fire Taunton fell. A new legend now began to circulate among our troops; and it was, that when he and the French officer came face to face once more, there would be weeping in France.

The war went on. In the returns sent home appeared these words: "Severely wounded, but not dangerously, Lieutenant Richard Doubledick."

At Midsummer-time, in the year eighteen hundred and fourteen, Lieutenant Richard Doubledick, now a browned soldier, seven-and-thirty years of age, came home to England invalided. He brought the hair with him, near his heart.

Though he was weak and suffered pain, he lost not an hour in getting down to Frome in Somersetshire, where Taunton's mother lived. In the sweet, compassionate words that naturally present themselves to the mind to-night, "he was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow."

It was a Sunday evening, and the lady sat at her quiet garden-window, reading the Bible; reading to herself, in a trembling voice, that very passage in it, as I have heard him tell. He heard the words: "Young man, I say unto thee, arise!"

He had to pass the window; and the bright, dark eyes of his

debased time seemed to look at him. Her heart told her who he was; she came to the door quickly, and fell upon his neck.

"He saved me from ruin, made me a human creature, won me from infamy and shame. O, God for ever bless him! As He will, He will!"

"He will!" the lady answered. "I know he is in Heaven!" Then she piteously cried, "But O, my darling boy, my darling boy!"

Never from the hour when Private Richard Doubledick enlisted at Chatham had the Private, Corporal, Sergeant, Sergeant-Major, Ensign, or Lieutenant breathed his right name, or the name of Mary Marshall, or a word of the story of his life, into any ear except his reclamer's. That previous scene in his existence was closed. He had firmly resolved that his expiation should be to live unknown.

But that night, remembering the words he had cherished for two years—"Tell her how we became friends; it will comfort her, as it comforts me—" he related everything. It gradually seemed to him as if in his maturity he had recovered a mother; it gradually seemed to her as if in her bereavement she had found a son.

PART II.

DURING his stay in England, the quiet garden into which he had slowly and painfully crept, a stranger, became the boundary of his home; when he was able to rejoin his regiment in the spring, he left the garden, thinking was this indeed the first time he had ever turned his face towards the old colours, with a woman's blessing!

He followed them—so ragged, so scarred and pierced now, that they would scarcely hold together—to Quatre Bras and Ligny. He stood beside them, in an awful stillness of many men, shadowy through the mist and drizzle of a wet June forenoon, on the field of Waterloo. And down to that hour the picture in his mind of the French officer had never been compared with the reality.

The famous regiment was in action early in the battle, and received its first check in many an eventful year, when he was seen to fall. But it swept on to avenge him, and left behind it no such creature in the world of consciousness as Lieutenant Richard Doubledick.

Dead, as to any sentient life that was in it, and yet alive—the form that had been Lieutenant Richard Doubledick, with whose praises England rang, was conveyed to Brussels. There it was tenderly laid down in hospital; and there it lay, week after week, through the long bright summer days, until the harvest, spared by war, had ripened and was gathered in.

Over and over again the sun rose and set upon the crowded city; indifferent to all, a marble face lay on a bed, like the face of a recumbent statue on the tomb of Lieutenant Richard Doubledick.

Slowly labouring, at last, through a long heavy dream of confused time and place, presenting faint glimpses of army surgeons whom he knew, and of faces that had been familiar to his youth—dearest and kindest among them, Mary Marshall's, with a solicitude upon it more like reality than anything he could discern—Lieutenant Richard Doubledick came back to life!

It was so tranquil and so lovely that he thought he had passed into another world. And he said in a faint voice, "Taunton, are you near me?"

A face bent over him. Not his, his mother's.

"I came to nurse you. We have nursed you many weeks. You were moved here long ago. Do you remember nothing?"

"Nothing."

The lady kissed his cheek, and held his hand, soothing him.

"Where is the regiment? What has happened? Let me call you mother. What has happened, mother?"

"A great victory, dear. The war is over, and the regiment was the bravest in the field."

His eyes kindled, his lips trembled, he sobbed, and the tears ran down his face. He was very weak, too weak to move his hand.

"Was it dark just now?" he asked presently.

"No."

"It was only dark to me? Something passed away, like a black shadow. But as it went, and the sun—O the blessed sun, how beautiful it is!—touched my face, I thought I saw a light white cloud pass out at the door. Was there nothing that went out?"

She shook her head, and in a little while he fell asleep, she still holding his hand, and soothing him.

From that time he recovered slowly, for he had been desperately wounded in the head, and had been shot in the body, but making some little advance every day. When he had gained

sufficient strength to converse as he lay in bed, he soon began to remark that Mrs. Taunton always brought him back to his own history. Then he recalled his preserver's dying words, and thought, "It comforts her."

One day he awoke out of a sleep refreshed, and asked her to read to him. But the curtain of the bed, softening the light, which she always drew back when he awoke, that she might see him from her table at the bedside where she sat at work, was held undrawn; and a woman's voice spoke, which was not hers.

"Can you bear to see a stranger?" it said softly. "Will you like to see a stranger?"

"Stranger!" he repeated. The voice awoke old memories, before the days of Private Richard Doubledick.

"A stranger now, but not a stranger once," it said in tones that thrilled him. "Richard, dear Richard, lost through so many years, my name—"

He cried out her name, "Mary," and she held him in her arms, and his head lay on her bosom.

"I am not breaking a rash vow, Richard. These are not Mary Marshall's lips that speak. I have another name."

She was married.

"I have another name, Richard. Did you ever hear it?"

"Never!"

He looked into her face, so pensively beautiful, and wondered at the smile upon it through her tears.

"Think again, Richard. Are you sure you never heard my altered name?"

"Never!"

"Don't move your head to look at me, dear Richard. Let it lie here, while I tell my story. I loved a generous, noble man; loved him with my whole heart; loved him for years and years; loved him faithfully, devotedly; loved him with no hope of return; loved him, knowing nothing of his highest qualities—not even knowing that he was alive. He was a brave soldier. He was honoured and beloved by thousands of thousands, when the mother of his dear friend found me, and showed me that in all his triumphs he had never forgotten me. He was wounded in a great battle. He was brought, dying, here, into Brussels. I came to watch and tend him, as I would have joyfully gone, and with such a purpose, to the dreariest ends of the earth. When he knew no one else, he knew

me. When he suffered most, he bore his sufferings barely murmuring, content to rest his head where yours rests now. When he lay at the point of death he married me, that he might call me Wife before he died. And the name, my dear love, that I took on that forgotten night—”

“I know it now!” he sobbed. “The shadowy remembrance strengthens. It is come back. I thank Heaven that my mind is quite restored! My Mary, kiss me; lull this weary head to rest, or I shall die of gratitude. His parting words are fulfilled. I see Home again!”

Well! They were happy. It was a long recovery, but they were happy through it all. The snow had melted on the ground, and the birds were singing in the leafless thickets of the early spring, when those three were first able to ride out together, and when people flocked about the open carriage to cheer and congratulate *Captain Richard Doubledick*.

But even then it became necessary for the Captain, instead of returning to England, to complete his recovery in the climate of Southern France. They found a spot upon the Rhône, within a ride of the old town of Avignon, and within view of its broken bridge, which was all they could desire; they lived there, together, six months; then returned to England. Mrs. Taunton, growing old after three years—though not so old as that her bright, dark eyes were dimmed—and remembering that her strength had been benefited by the change, resolved to go back for a year to those parts. So she went with a faithful servant, who had often carried her son in his arms; and she was to be rejoined and escorted home, at the year’s end, by *Captain Richard Doubledick*.

She wrote regularly to her children (as she called them now), and they to her. She went to the neighbourhood of Aix; and there, in their own château near the farmer’s house she rented, she grew into intimacy with a family belonging to that part of France. The intimacy began in her often meeting among the vineyards a pretty child, a girl with a most compassionate heart, who was never tired of listening to the solitary English lady’s stories of her poor son and the cruel wars. The family were as gentle as the child, and at length she came to know them so well that she accepted their invitation to pass the last month of her residence abroad under their roof. All this intelligence she wrote home, piecemeal as it came about, from time to time; and at last enclosed

a polite note, from the head of the château, soliciting, on the occasion of his approaching mission to that neighbourhood, the honour of the company of cet homme si justement célèbre, Monsieur le Capitaine Richard Doubledick.

Captain Doubledick, now a hardy, handsome man, in the full vigour of life, broader across the chest and shoulders than he had ever been before, dispatched a courteous reply, and followed it in person.

It was a large château, of the genuine old ghostly kind, with round towers, and extinguishers, and a leaden roof, and more windows than Aladdin's Palace, and the Captain saw no bell or knocker, and walked in.

He walked into a lofty stone hall, refreshingly cool and gloomy after the glare of a Southern day's travel. Extending along the four sides of this hall was a gallery, leading to suites of rooms; and it was lighted from the top. Still no bell was to be seen.

"This is a ghostly beginning," said the Captain, halting, ashamed of the clanking of his boots.

He started back, and felt his face turn white. In the gallery, looking down at him, stood the French officer—the officer whose picture he had carried in his mind so long and so far. Compared with the original, at last—in every lineament how like it was!

He moved, and disappeared, and Captain Richard Doubledick heard his steps coming quickly down into the hall. He entered through an archway. There was a bright, sudden look upon his face, much such a look as it had worn in that fatal moment.

Monsieur le Capitaine Richard Doubledick? Enchanted to receive him! A thousand apologies! The servants were all out in the air. There was a little fête among them in the garden. In effect, it was the fête day of his daughter, the little cherished and protected of Madame Taunton.

He was so gracious and so frank that Monsieur le Capitaine Richard Doubledick could not withhold his hand. "It is the hand of a brave Englishman," said the French officer, retaining it while he spoke. "I could respect a brave Englishman, even as my foe, how much more as my friend! I also am a soldier!"

"He has not remembered me, as I have remembered him; he did not take such note of my face, that day, as I took of his," thought Captain Richard Doubledick. "How shall I tell him?"

A resounding bell rang, and the French officer begged to show him his rooms.

"You were at Waterloo," said the French officer.

"I was," said Captain Richard Doubledick. "And at Badajos."

Left alone with the sound of his own stern voice in his ears, he sat down to consider, What shall I do, and how shall I tell him? At that time, unhappily, many deplorable duels had been fought between English and French officers, arising out of the recent war; and these duels, and how to avoid this officer's hospitality, were the uppermost thoughts in Captain Richard Doubledick's mind.

He was thinking, and letting the time run out in which he should have dressed for dinner, when Mrs. Taunton spoke to him outside the door, asking if he could give her the letter he had brought from Mary. "His mother, above all," the Captain thought. "How shall I tell *her*?"

"You will form a friendship with your host. I hope," said Mrs. Taunton, whom he hurriedly admitted, "that will last for life. He is so true-hearted and so generous, Richard, that you can hardly fail to esteem one another. If *he* had been spared," she kissed (not without tears) the locket in which she wore his hair, "he would have appreciated him with his own magnanimity, and would have been truly happy that the evil days were past which made such a man his enemy."

She left the room; and the Captain walked, first to one window, whence he could see the dancing in the garden, then to another window, whence he could see the smiling prospect and the peaceful vineyards.

"Spirit of my departed friend," said he, "is it through thee these better thoughts are rising in my mind? Is it thou who hast shown me, all the way I have been drawn to meet this man, the blessings of the altered time? Is it thou who hast sent thy stricken mother to me, to stay my angry hand? Is it from thee the whisper comes, that this man did his duty as thou didst—and as I did, through thy guidance, which has wholly saved me here on earth—and that he did no more?"

He sat down, with his head buried in his hands; and, when he rose up, made the second strong resolution of his life—that neither to the French officer, nor to the mother of his departed friend, nor to any soul, while either of the two were living, would he breathe

what only he knew. And when he touched that French officer's glass with his own, that day at dinner, he secretly forgave him in the name of the Divine Forgiver of injuries.

[By kind permission of Messrs. Chapman and Hall..]

OUR NEXT-DOOR NEIGHBOUR.

(Condensed.)

WE are very fond of speculating, as we walk through a street, on the character and pursuits of the people who inhabit it; and nothing so materially assists us in these speculations as the appearance of the house-doors. The various expressions of the human countenance afford a beautiful and interesting study; but there is something in the physiognomy of street-door knockers almost as characteristic, and nearly as infallible. Whenever we visit a man for the first time, we contemplate the features of his knocker with the greatest curiosity, for we well know that, between the man and his knocker, there will inevitably be a greater or less degree of resemblance and sympathy.

For instance, there is one description of knocker that used to be common enough, but which is fast passing away—a large round one, with the jolly face of a convivial lion smiling blandly at you, as you twist the sides of your hair into a curl, or pull up your shirt collar while you are waiting for the door to be opened; we never saw that knocker on the door of a churlish man. No man ever saw it on the door of a small attorney or bill broker; they always patronise the other line; a heavy ferocious-looking fellow, with a countenance expressive of savage stupidity—a sort of grand-master among the knockers, and a great favourite with the selfish and brutal.

Then there is a little pert Egyptian knocker, with a long thin face, a pinched-up nose, and a very sharp chin; he is most in vogue with your government-office people, in light drabs and starched cravats—little spare priggish men, who are perfectly satisfied with their own opinions, and consider themselves of paramount importance.

We were greatly troubled, a few years ago, by the innovation of a new kind of knocker, without any face at all, composed of a wreath, depending from a hand or small truncheon. A little

trouble and attention, however, enabled us to reconcile the new system to our favourite theory. You will invariably find this knocker on the doors of cold and formal people, who always ask you why you *don't* come, and never say *do*.

Everybody knows the brass knocker is common to suburban villas and extensive boarding-schools; and, having noticed this genus, we have recapitulated all the most prominent and strongly-defined species.

One day we viewed the entire removal of the knocker from the door of the next house to the one we lived in, and the substitution of a bell. This was a calamity we had never anticipated.

We sauntered moodily from the spot, and bent our steps towards Eaton Square, then just building. What was our astonishment and indignation to find that bells were fast becoming the rule, and knockers the exception! We at once hastened home, and resolved from that day forward to vent our speculations on our next-door neighbour, in person instead of by knocker.

Our next-door neighbour's house without the knocker was in the occupation of a City clerk, and there was a neatly-written bill in the parlour window intimating that lodgings for a single gentleman were to be let within.

It was a neat, dull little house, on the shady side of the way, with new, narrow floor cloth in the passage, and new, narrow stair-carpet up to the first floor. The paper was new, and the paint was new, and the furniture was new; and all three—paper, paint, and furniture—bespoke the limited means of the tenant.

The drawingroom was destined for the reception of the single gentleman during the day, and a little back-room on the same floor was assigned as his sleeping apartment by night.

The bill had not been long in the window when a stout good-humoured-looking gentleman appeared. In a day or two he came in, and shortly afterwards his real character came out.

First of all, he displayed a most extraordinary partiality for sitting up till three or four o'clock in the morning, then he invited friends home, who used to come at ten o'clock, and begin to get happy about the small hours, when they evinced their perfect contentment by singing songs with half-a-dozen verses of two lines each, and a chorus of ten, which chorus used to be shouted forth by the whole strength of the company, in the most enthusiastic and vociferous manner.

Now, this was bad enough, occurring as it did three times a week on the average, but this was not all; for when the company *did* go away, instead of walking quietly down the street, as anybody else's company would have done, they amused themselves by making alarming and frightful noises; and one night, a red-faced gentleman in a white hat knocked in the most urgent manner at the door of the powdered-headed old gentleman at No. 3, and when the powdered-headed old gentleman had groped down-stairs and opened the street-door, the red-faced man in the white hat said he hoped he'd excuse his giving him so much trouble, but he'd feel obliged if he'd favour him with a glass of cold spring water, and the loan of a shilling for a cab to take him home, on which the old gentleman slammed the door and went up stairs, and threw the contents of his water-jug out of the window—very straight, only it went over the wrong man; and the whole street was involved in confusion.

A joke's a joke; but the population of our street were so dull of apprehension as to be quite lost to a sense of the drollery of this proceeding; and the consequence was, that our next-door neighbour was obliged to tell the single gentleman that, unless he gave up entertaining his friends at home, he really must be compelled to part with him. The single gentleman received the remonstrance with great good-humour, and promised, from that time forward, to spend his evenings at a coffee-house—a determination which afforded general and unmixed satisfaction.

The next night passed off very well, everybody being delighted with the change; but, on the next, the noises were renewed with greater spirit than ever. The single gentleman's friends, being unable to see him in his own house every alternate night, had come to the determination of seeing him home every night; and what with the discordant greetings of the friends at parting, and the noise created by the single gentleman in his passage up stairs, and his subsequent struggle to get his boots off, the evil was not to be borne. So, our next-door neighbour gave the single gentleman, who was a very good lodger in other respects, notice to quit; and the single gentleman went away, and entertained his friends in other lodgings.

The next applicant for the vacant first floor was of a very different character from the troublesome single gentleman, who had just quitted it. He was a tall, thin young gentleman, with a

profusion of brown hair, reddish whiskers, and very slightly developed moustaches. So unlike the roystering single gentleman! Such insinuating manners, and such a delightful address! So seriously disposed, too! When he first came to look at the lodgings, he inquired most particularly whether he was sure to be able to get a seat in the parish church; and, when he had agreed to take them, he requested to have a list of the different local charities, as he intended to subscribe his mite to the most deserving among them. Our next-door neighbour was now perfectly happy.

The serious man arrived, and his luggage was to arrive from the country next morning. He borrowed a clean shirt and a Prayer-book from our next-door neighbour, and retired to rest at an early hour, requesting that he might be called punctually at ten o'clock next morning—not before, as he was much fatigued.

He *was* called, and did not answer; he was called again, but there was no reply. Our next-door neighbour became alarmed, and burst the door open. The serious man had left the house mysteriously, carrying with him the shirt, the Prayer-book, a teaspoon, and the bedclothes!

The next bill which made its appearance in the parlour window intimated generally that there were furnished apartments to let on the first floor. The bill was soon removed. The new lodgers at first attracted our curiosity, and afterwards excited our interest.

They were a young lad of eighteen or nineteen, and his mother, a lady of about fifty, or it might be less. The mother wore a widow's weeds, and the boy was also clothed in deep mourning. They were poor—very poor; for their only means of support arose from the pittance the boy earned by copying writings, and translating for booksellers.

They had removed from some country place, and settled in London. They were proud under their reverses, and above revealing their wants and privations to strangers. How bitter those privations were, and how hard the boy worked to remove them, no one ever knew but themselves. Night after night, two, three, four hours after midnight, could we hear the occasional raking up of the scanty fire, or the hollow and half-stifled cough, which indicated his being still at work; and day after day could we see more plainly that nature had set that unearthly light in his plain-tive face which is the beacon of her worst disease.

Actuated, we hope, by a higher feeling than mere curiosity, we

contrived to establish, first an acquaintance, and then a close intimacy, with the poor strangers. Our worst fears were realised; the boy was sinking fast.

A few shillings now and then—for needlework—were all the mother could earn.

One beautiful autumn evening we went to pay our customary visit to the invalid. He was lying on the sofa at the open window, gazing at the setting sun. His mother had been reading the Bible to him, for she closed the book as we entered, and advanced to meet us.

"I was telling William," she said, "that we must manage to take him into the country somewhere, so that he may get quite well. He is not ill, you know, but he is not very strong, and has exerted himself too much lately." Poor thing! The tears that streamed through her fingers as she turned aside, as if to adjust her close widow's cap, too plainly showed how fruitless was the attempt to deceive herself.

We sat down by the head of the sofa. The boy placed one hand in ours, grasped his mother's arm with the other, drew her hastily towards him, and fervently kissed her cheek. There was a pause. He sunk back upon his pillow, and looked long and earnestly in his mother's face.

"William, William!" murmured the mother after a long interval, "don't look at me so—speak to me, dear!"

The boy smiled languidly, but an instant afterwards his features resolved into the same cold, solemn gaze.

"William, dear William! rouse yourself, dear; don't look at me so, love—pray, don't! Oh, my God! what shall I do?" cried the widow, clasping her hands in agony. "My dear boy! he is dying!"

The boy raised himself by a violent effort, and folded his hands together. "Mother! dear, dear mother, bury me in the open fields—anywhere but in these dreadful streets. I should like to be where you can see my grave, but not in these close crowded streets; they have killed me; kiss me again, mother; put your arm round my neck——"

He fell back, and a strange expression stole upon his features; not of pain or suffering, but an indescribable fixing of every line and muscle.

The boy was dead.

DO-THE-BOYS HALL.

(Adapted.)

PART I.

THE following advertisement appeared in the morning papers:—

EDUCATION.—At Mr. Wackford Squeers's Academy, Dotheboys Hall, at the delightful village of Dotheboys, near Greta Bridge in Yorkshire, youth are boarded, clothed, booked, furnished with pocket money, provided with all necessaries, instructed in all languages living and dead, mathematics, orthography, geometry, astronomy, trigonometry, the use of the globes, algebra, single stick (if required), writing, arithmetic, fortification, and every other branch of classical literature. Terms, twenty guineas per annum. No extras, no vacations, and diet unparalleled. Mr. Squeers is in town, and attends daily, from one till four, at the Saracen's Head, Snow Hill. N.B.—An able assistant wanted. Annual salary, £5. A Master of Arts would be preferred.

Nicholas Nickleby obtained the above situation, having found that it was not absolutely necessary to have acquired the degree; and arrived at the Inn, to join Mr. Squeers, at eight o'clock of a November morning. He found that learned gentleman sitting at breakfast, with five little boys in a row on the opposite seat. Mr. Squeers had before him a small measure of coffee, a plate of hot toast, and a cold round of beef; but he was at that moment intent on preparing breakfast for the little boys.

"This is twopenn'orth of milk, is it, waiter?" said Mr. Squeers, looking down into a large blue mug, and slanting it gently, so as to get an accurate view of the quantity of liquid contained in it.

"That's twopenn'orth, sir," replied the waiter.

"What a rare article milk is, to be sure, in London! Just fill that mug up with lukewarm water, William, will you?"

"To the very top, sir? Why, the milk will be drowned."

"Never you mind that. Serve it right for being so dear. You ordered that thick bread and butter for *three*, did you?"

"Coming directly, sir."

"You needn't hurry yourself, there's plenty of time. Conquer your passions, boys, and don't be eager after vittles." As he uttered this moral precept, Mr. Squeers took a large bite out of the cold beef, and recognised Nicholas.

"Sit down, Mr. Nickleby. Here we are, a breakfasting you see! Oh! that's the milk and water, is it, William? Very good; don't forget the bread and butter presently. Ah! here's richness!

Think of the many beggars and orphans in the streets that would be glad of this, little boys. A shocking thing hunger is, isn't it, Mr. Nickleby?"

"Very shocking, sir," said Nicholas.

"When I say number one, the boy on the left hand nearest the window may take a drink; and when I say number two, the boy next him will go in, and so till we come to number five, which is the last boy. Are you ready?"

"Yes, sir," cried *all* the little boys.

"That's right, keep ready till I tell you to begin. Subdue your appetites, my dears, and you've conquered human natur'. This is the way we inculcate strength of mind, Mr. Nickleby. Number one may take a drink."

Number one seized the mug ravenously, and had just drunk enough to make him wish for more, when Mr. Squeers gave the signal for number two, who gave up at the same interesting moment to number three; and the process was repeated until the milk and water terminated with number five.

"And now," said the schoolmaster dividing the bread and butter for *three* into as many portions as there were children, "you had better look sharp with your breakfast, for the horn will blow in a minute or two, and then every boy leaves off.—Ah! I thought it wouldn't be long; put what you haven't had time to eat, in here, boys! You'll want it on the road!"

Which they certainly did, for the weather was intensely and bitterly cold; a great deal of snow fell from time to time; and the wind was intolerably keen. However, they arrived quite safely; and Nicholas, weary, retired to rest.

PART II.

A ride of two hundred and odd miles in severe weather, is one of the best softeners of a hard bed that ingenuity can devise. Perhaps it is even a sweetener of dreams, for those which hovered over the rough couch of Nicholas, and whispered their airy nothings in his ear were of an agreeable and happy kind. He was making his fortune very fast indeed, when the voice of Mr. Squeers admonished him that it was time to rise.

"Past seven, Nickleby."

"Has morning come already?"

"Ah! that it has, and ready iced too. Now, Nickleby, come; tumble up, will you?"

Nicholas needed no further admonition, but "tumbled up" at once.

"Here's a pretty go, the pump's froze."

"Indeed!"

"Yes. You can't wash yourself this morning."

"Not wash myself!"

"No, not a bit of it. So you must be contented with giving yourself a dry polish till we break the ice in the well, and can get a bucketful out for the boys. Don't stand staring at me, but do look sharp, will you?"

The voice of Mr. Squeers's amiable consort was heard in the passage, demanding admittance.

"Come in, my love," said Squeers.

"I can't find the school spoon anywhere," said the lady, entering.

"Never mind it, my dear, it's of no consequence."

Mrs. Squeers persisted in her search, and having at length found it, proceeded to the schoolroom accompanied by Squeers and Nicholas.

"There, this is our shop, Nickleby!"

It was a crowded scene. A bare and dirty room, with a couple of windows, whereof a tenth part might be of glass, the remainder being stopped up with old copybooks and paper. Pale and haggard faces; lank and bony figures; little faces which should have been handsome, darkened with the scowl of sullen, dogged suffering; there was childhood with the light of its eye quenched, its beauty gone, and its helplessness alone remaining—truly an incipient Hell.

And yet this scene, painful as it was, had its grotesque features. Mrs. Squeers stood at one of the desks, presiding over an immense basin of brimstone and treacle, of which delicious compound she administered a large instalment to each boy in succession, using for the purpose a common wooden spoon, which widened every young gentleman's mouth considerably; they being all obliged, under heavy corporal penalties, to take in the whole of the bowl at a gasp.

"Now," said Squeers, "is that physicking over?"

"Just over," said Mrs. Squeers, choking the last boy in her hurry. Here, you Smike; take away now. Look sharp!"

Smikey shuffled out with the basin, and Mrs. Squeers having called up a little boy with a curly head, and wiped her hands upon it, hurried out after him.

After some half-hour's delay, Mr. Squeers reappeared, and the boys took their places and their books, of which latter commodity the average was about one to eight learners. A few minutes having elapsed, Mr. Squeers called up the first class.

"This is the first class in English spelling and philosophy, Nickleby; we'll get up a Latin one, and hand that over to you. Now, then, where's the first boy?"

"Please, sir, he's cleaning the back parlour window."

"So he is, to be sure. We go upon the practical mode of teaching, Nickleby; the regular education system. C-l-e-a-n, clean, verb active, to make bright, to scour. W-i-n, win, d-e-r, der, winder, a casement. When the boy knows this out of book, he goes and does it. It's just the same principle as the use of the globes. Where's the second boy?"

"Please, sir, he's weeding the garden."

"To be sure, so he is. B-o-t, bot, t-i-n, tin, bottin, n-e-y, ney, bottinney, noun substantive, a knowledge of plants. When he has learned that bottinney means a knowledge of plants, he goes and knows 'em. That's our system, Nickleby. Third boy, what's a horse?"

"A beast, sir."

"So it is. A horse is a quadruped, and quadruped's Latin for beast, as everybody that's gone through the grammar knows, or else where's the use of having grammars at all? As your perfect in that, go and look after *my* horse, and rub him down well, or I'll rub you down. The rest of the class go and draw water up, till somebody tells you to leave off, for it's washing-day to-morrow, and they want the coppers filled."

So saying, he dismissed the first class to their experiments in *practical* philosophy.

It was Mr. Squeers's custom to call the boys together, and make a sort of report, after every half-yearly visit to the metropolis. They were, therefore, soon recalled from the house-window garden, stable, and cow-yard, and Mr. Squeers entered the room and proclaimed "Silence! Let any boy speak a word without leave, and I'll take the skin off his back."

A death-like silence immediately prevailed.

"Boys, I've been to London, and have returned to my family and you, as strong and well as ever."

According to half-yearly custom, the boys gave three feeble cheers at this refreshing intelligence. Such cheers! Sighs of extra strength with the chill on.

"I have seen the parents of some boys, and they're so glad to hear how their sons are getting on, that there's no prospect at all of their going away, which of course is a very pleasant thing to reflect upon, for all parties. I have had disappointments to contend against; Bolder's father was two pound ten short. Where is Bolder?"

"Here he is, please sir," rejoined twenty officious voices.

"Come here, Bolder," said Squeers.

An unhealthy-looking boy, with warts all over his hands, stepped from his place to the master's desk, and raised his eyes imploringly to Squeers's face.

"Bolder, if your father thinks that because—why, what's this, sir?"

As Squeers spoke, he caught up the boy's hand by the cuff of his jacket, and surveyed it with an edifying aspect of horror and disgust.

"What do you call this, sir?"

"I can't help it, indeed, sir," rejoined the boy, crying. "They will come; it's the dirty work I think, sir—at least I don't know what it is, sir, but it's not my fault."

"Bolder, you're an incorrigible young scoundrel, and as the last thrashing did you no good, we must see what another will do towards beating it out of you."

With this, and wholly disregarding a piteous cry for mercy, Mr. Squeers fell upon the boy and caned him soundly; not leaving off, indeed, until his arm was tired out.

"There," said Squeers, "rub away as hard as you like, you won't rub that off in a hurry. Now let us see. A letter for Cobbey. Stand up Cobbey. Oh! Cobbey's grandmother is dead, and his uncle John has took to drinking, which is all the news his sister sends, except eighteenpence, which will just pay for that broken square of glass. Mrs. Squeers, my dear, will you take the money?"

"Graymarsh, he's the next. Stand up, Graymarsh. Graymarsh's maternal aunt is very glad to hear he's so well and happy, and sends her respectful compliments to Mrs. Squeers, and thinks

she must be an angel. She likewise thinks Mr. Squeers is too good for this world; but hopes he may long be spared to carry on the business. Would have sent the two pair of stockings as desired, but is short of money, so forwards a tract instead, and hopes Graymarsh will put his trust in Providence. Hopes, above all, that he will study in everything to please Mr. and Mrs. Squeers, and look upon them as his only friends; and that he will love Master Squeers; and not object to sleeping five in a bed, which no Christian should. Ah! a delightful letter. Very affecting indeed."

"Mobbs!—Mobbs's mother-in-law took to her bed on hearing that he wouldn't eat fat, and has been very ill ever since. She wishes to know by an early post where he expects to go to if he quarrels with his vittles; and with what feelings he could turn up his nose at the cow's liver broth, after his good master had asked a blessing on it. This was told her in the London newspapers—not by Mr. Squeers, for he's too kind and good to set anybody against anybody—and it has vexed her so much, Mobbs can't think. She is sorry to find he is discontented, which is sinful and horrid, and hopes Mr. Squeers will flog him into a happier state of mind; with which view she has also stopped his halfpenny a week pocket-money, and given a double-bladed knife with a corkscrew in it to the Missionaries, which she had bought on purpose for him. A sulky state of feeling won't do. Cheerfulness and contentment must be kept up. Mobbs, come to me!"

Mobbs moved slowly towards the desk, rubbing his eyes in anticipation of good cause for doing so; and he soon afterwards retired, with as good cause as a boy need have.

This business despatched, a few slovenly lessons were performed, and Squeers retired to his fireside, leaving Nicholas to take care of the boys in the school-room, which was very cold, and where a meal of bread and cheese was served out shortly after dark.

There was a small stove at that corner of the room which was nearest to the master's desk, and by it Nicholas sat down, depressed and self-degraded.

As he was absorbed in his meditations, he all at once encountered the upturned face of Smike, who was on his knees before the stove picking a few stray cinders from the hearth and planting them on the fire. He had paused to steal a look at Nicholas, and when he saw that he was observed, shrunk back, as if expecting a blow.

"You need not fear me," said Nicholas, kindly. "Are you cold?"

"N-n-o."

"You are shivering."

"I am not cold. I'm used to it."

There was such an obvious fear of giving offence in his manner, and he was such a timid, broken-spirited creature, that Nicholas could not help exclaiming, "Poor fellow!"

If he had struck the drudge, he would have slunk away without a word. But now he burst into tears.

"Oh dear, oh dear! my heart will break. It will, it will!"

"Hush! Be a man; you are nearly one by years, God help you."

"By years! Oh dear, dear, how many of them! How many of them since I was a little child, younger than any that are here now! Where are they all!"

"Whom do you speak of? Tell me."

"My friends, myself—my—oh! what sufferings mine have been!"

"There is always hope."

"No, no; none for me. Do you remember the boy that died here?"

"I was not here, you know; but what of him?"

"Why, I was with him at night, and when it was all silent he cried no more for friends he wished to come and sit with him, but began to see faces round his bed that came from home; he said they smiled, and talked to him; and he died at last lifting his head to kiss them. Do you hear?"

"Yes, yes," rejoined Nicholas.

"What faces will smile on me when I die! Who will talk to me in those long nights! They cannot come from home; they would frighten me if they did, for I don't know what it is, and shouldn't know them. Pain and fear, pain and fear for me, alive or dead. No hope, no hope!"

The bell rang to bed; and the boy, subsiding at the sound into his usual listless state, crept away as if anxious to avoid notice. It was with a heavy heart that Nicholas soon afterwards—no, not retired; there was no retirement there—followed—to his dirty and crowded dormitory.

PART III.

Smikey, goaded by the many injuries inflicted upon him, ran away from the school, but was re-captured and brought back in triumph. In the afternoon Squeers made his appearance with a countenance of portentous import.

"Is every boy here?" asked Squeers. "Each boy keep his place. Nickleby! to your desk, sir. Well, Smikey, have you anything to say for yourself? Nothing, I suppose, eh? Stand a little out of the way, Mrs. Squeers, my dear; I've hardly got room enough."

"Spare me, sir," cried Smikey.

"Oh! that's all, is it? Yes, I'll flog you within an inch of your life, and spare you that."

Squeers caught the boy firmly in his grip; one desperate cut had fallen on his body—he was wincing from the lash and uttering a scream of pain—it was raised again, and again about to fall—when Nicholas Nickleby, suddenly starting up, cried "Stop!" in a voice that made the rafters ring.

"Who cried stop?" said Squeers.

"I," said Nicholas; "This must not go on."

"Must not go on!"

"No! I say must not, shall not. I will prevent it. You have disregarded all my quiet interference in this miserable lad's behalf, you have returned no answer to the letter in which I begged forgiveness for him, and offered to be responsible that he would remain quietly here. Don't blame me for this public interference. You have brought it upon yourself; not I."

"Sit down, beggar!"

"Wretch, touch him at your peril! I will not stand by, and see it done. My blood is up, and I have the strength of ten such men as you. Look to yourself, for I will not spare you, if you drive me on! I have a long series of insults to avenge, and my indignation is aggravated by the dastardly cruelties practised on helpless infancy in this foul den. Have a care; for if you do raise the devil within me, the consequences shall fall heavily upon your own head!"

Squeers spat upon him, and struck him a blow across the face which raised up a bar of livid flesh. Nicholas wrested the weapon from his hand, and beat the ruffian till he roared for mercy. He

then flung Squeers from him with all the force he could muster. The violence of his fall precipitated Mrs. Squeers completely over an adjacent form; and Squeers, striking his head against it in his descent, lay at his full length on the ground, stunned and motionless.

Then such a cheer arose as the walls of Dotheboys Hall had never echoed before and were destined never to respond to again. When the sound had died away, the school was empty; and of the crowd not one remained.

Having brought affairs to this happy termination, he packed up a few clothes in a small leathern valise, and struck into the road.

Lifting up his eyes, Nicholas beheld a horseman coming towards him, whom, on nearer approach, he discovered to be Mr. John Browdie, an honest Yorkshire farmer, with whom he had had an altercation sometime previously.

"Servant, young genelman," said John.

"Yours," said Nicholas.

"Weel; we ha' met at last."

"Yes. Come! we parted on no very good terms the last time we met; it was my fault, I believe; but I had no intention of offending you, and no idea that I was doing so. I was very sorry for it afterwards. Will you shake hands?"

"Shake honds! ah! that I weel; but wa'at be the matther wi' thy feace, mun? it be all brokken loike?"

"It is a cut, a blow; but I returned it to the giver, and with good interest too."

"Noa, did'ee, though? Well deane! I loike 'un for thot."

"The fact is, that I have been ill-treated."

"Noa, dean't say thot."

"Yes, I have, by that man Squeers, and I have beaten him soundly, and am leaving this place in consequence."

"What! Beatten the schoolmeaster! Ho! ho! ho! Beatten the schoolmeaster! who ever heard o' the loike o' thot noo! Giv' us thee hond agean, yongster. Beatten the schoolmeaster! Oh I loove thee for't!"

With these expressions of delight John Browdie laughed and laughed again. When his mirth had subsided, he inquired what Nicholas meant to do; on his informing him to go straight to London, he shook his head doubtfully, and inquired if he knew how much the coaches charged to carry passengers so far.

"No, I do not," said Nicholas; "but it is of no great consequence to me, for I intend walking."

"Gang awa' to Lunnon afoot!"

"Every step of the way. I should be many steps further on by this time, and so good-bye!"

"Nay, noo. Hoo much cash hast thee gotten?"

"Not much, but I can make it enough. Where there's a will there's a way, you know."

John Browdie put his hand in his pocket and pulled out an old purse insisting that Nicholas should borrow from him whatever he required for his present necessities.

"Dean't be afeard, mun," he said; "tak' eneaf to carry thee whoam. Thee'lt pay me yan day, a' warrant."

Nicholas could by no means be prevailed upon to borrow more than a sovereign, with which loan Mr. Browdie, after many entreaties that he would accept of more, was fain to content himself.

"Tak' that bit o' timber to help thee on wi', mun," he added, pressing his stick on Nicholas; "keep a good heart and bless thee. Beatten the schoolmeaster! It's the best thing a've heard this twenty year!"

THE STROLLER'S TALE.

(Condensed)

THERE is nothing of the marvellous in what I am going to relate; there is nothing even uncommon in it. Want and sickness are too common, in many stations of life, to deserve more notice than is usually bestowed on the most ordinary vicissitudes of human nature. I have thrown these few notes together, because the subject of them was well known to me for many years. I traced his progress downwards, step by step, until at last he reached that excess of destitution from which he never rose again.

The man of whom I speak was a low pantomime actor; and, like many people of his class, an habitual drunkard. In his better days, before he had become enfeebled by dissipation and emaciated by disease, he had been in the receipt of a good salary. His besetting sin gained so fast upon him, however, that at last he could obtain no engagement, and he wanted bread.

When he had been existing for upwards of a year no one knew

how, I had a short engagement at one of the theatres on the Surrey side of the water, and here I saw this man whom I had lost sight of for some time. I was dressed to leave the house, when he tapped me on the shoulder. Never shall I forget the repulsive sight that met my eye when I turned round. He was dressed for the pantomime, in all the absurdity of a clown's costume. The spectral figures in the Dance of Death, the most frightful shapes that the ablest painter ever portrayed on canvas, never presented an appearance half so ghastly. His bloated body and shrunken legs—their deformity enhanced a hundred fold by the fantastic dress—the glassy eyes, contrasting fearfully with the thick white paint with which the face was besmeared; the grotesquely ornamented head, trembling with paralysis, and the long, skinny hands, rubbed with white chalk. His voice was hollow and tremulous, as he took me aside, and in broken words recounted a long catalogue of sickness and privations, terminating as usual with an urgent request for the loan of a trifling sum of money. I put a few shillings in his hand, and as I turned away I heard the roar of laughter which followed his first tumble on to the stage.

A few nights afterwards a boy put a dirty scrap of paper in my hand, on which were scrawled a few words in pencil, intimating that the man was dangerously ill, and begging me, after the performance, to see him at his lodging. It was a dark cold night when I sallied forth on my errand. I, however, succeeded, after a little difficulty, in finding the house to which I had been directed—a coal-shed, with one storey above it, in the back room of which lay the object of my search. A wretched-looking woman, the man's wife, met me on the stairs, and, telling me that he had just fallen into a kind of doze, led me softly in, and placed a chair for me at the bedside. The sick man was lying with his face turned towards the wall; and as he took no heed of my presence, I had leisure to observe the place in which I found myself. He was lying on an old bedstead, which turned up during the day. A little child was sleeping on a temporary bed which had been made for it on the floor, and the woman sat on a chair by its side.

In his restless attempts to procure some easy resting-place for his head, he tossed his hand out of the bed, and it fell on mine. He started up, and stared eagerly in my face.

"Mr. Hutley, John," said his wife; "Mr. Hutley, that you sent for to-night, you know."

"Ah!" said the invalid, passing his hand across his forehead; "Hutley—Hutley—let me see." He seemed endeavouring to collect his thoughts for a few seconds, and then grasping me tightly by the wrist, said, "Don't leave me—don't leave me, old fellow. She'll murder me; I know she will."

"Has he been long so?" said I, addressing his weeping wife.

"Since yesterday night," she replied. "John, John, don't you know me?"

"Don't let her come near me," said the man, with a shudder, as she stooped over him. "Drive her away; I can't bear her near me." He stared wildly at her, with a look of deadly apprehension, and then whispered in my ear, "I beat her, Jem; I beat her yesterday, and many times before. I have starved her and the boy too; and now I am weak and helpless, Jem, she'll murder me for it; I know she will. If you'd seen her cry, as I have, you'd know it too. Keep her off." He relaxed his grasp, and sank back exhausted on the pillow.

I knew but too well what all this meant. If I could have entertained any doubt of it, for an instant, one glance at the woman's pale face and wasted form would have sufficiently explained the real state of the case. "You had better stand aside," said I to the poor creature. "You can do him no good. Perhaps he will be calmer if he does not see you." She retired out of the man's sight. He opened his eyes, after a few seconds, and looked anxiously round.

"Is she gone?" he eagerly inquired.

"Yes—yes," said I; "she shall not hurt you."

"I'll tell you what, Jem," said the man in a low voice, "she *does* hurt me. There's something in her eyes wakes such a dreadful fear in my heart that it drives me mad. All last night her large staring eyes and pale face were close to mine; wherever I turned, they turned; and whenever I started up from my sleep, she was at the bedside looking at me." He drew me closer to him, as he said in a deep, alarmed whisper—"Jem, she must be an evil spirit—a devil! Hush! I know she is. If she had been a woman she would have died long ago. No woman could have borne what she has."

I sickened at the thought of the long course of cruelty and neglect which must have occurred to produce such an impression on such a man. I sat there for upwards of two hours. Finding that in all probability the fever would not grow immediately worse

I left him, promising his miserable wife that I would repeat my visit next evening, and, if necessary, sit up with the patient during the night. I kept my promise. The last four and twenty hours had produced a frightful alteration. The fever was at its height. I took the seat I had occupied the night before, and there I sat for hours. I saw the wasted limbs, which a few hours before had been distorted for the amusement of a boisterous gallery, writhing under the tortures of a burning fever—I heard the clown's shrill laugh, blending with the low murmurings of the dying man.

The theatre, and the public-house, were the chief themes of the wretched man's wanderings. It was evening, he fancied; he had a part to play that night; it was late, and he must leave home instantly. Why did they hold him, and prevent his going?—he should lose the money—he must go. No! they would not let him. He hid his face in his burning hands, and feebly bemoaned his own weakness, and the cruelty of his persecutors. A short pause, and he shouted out a few doggerel rhymes—the last he had ever learnt. He rose in bed, drew up his withered limbs, and rolled about in uncouth positions; he was acting—he was at the theatre. A minute's silence, and he murmured the burden of some roaring song. He had reached the old house at last: how hot the room was. He had been ill, very ill, but he was well now, and happy. Fill up his glass. Who was that, that dashed it from his lips? It was the same persecutor that had followed him before. He fell back upon his pillow and moaned aloud. A short period of oblivion, and the walls and ceiling were alive with reptiles—frightful figures flitted to and fro—and the faces of men he knew, rendered hideous by gibing and mouthing, peered out from among them; they were searing him with heated irons, and binding his head with cords till the blood started; and he struggled madly for life.

At the close of one of these paroxysms, when I had with great difficulty held him down in his bed, he sank into what appeared to be a slumber. Overpowered with watching and exertion, I had closed my eyes for a few minutes, when I felt a violent clutch on my shoulder. I awoke instantly. He had raised himself up, so as to seat himself in bed—a dreadful change had come over his face, but consciousness had returned, for he evidently knew me. The child, who had been long since disturbed by his ravings, rose from its little bed, and ran towards its father, screaming with fright—the mother hastily caught it in her arms, lest he should injure it in

the violence of his insanity ; but, terrified by the alteration of his features, stood transfixed by the bed-side. He grasped my shoulder convulsively, and, striking his breast with the other hand, made a desperate attempt to articulate. It was unavailing—he extended his arm towards them, and made another violent effort. There was a rattling noise in the throat—a glare of the eye—a short stifled groan—and he fell back—dead !

THE ART OF PROPOSING.

WHEN Mr. Pickwick descended to the room in which he and Mr. Peter Magnus had spent the preceding evening, he found that gentleman with the major part of the contents of the two bags, the leathern hat-box, and the brown-paper parcel of the night before, displayed to all possible advantage on his person, while he himself was pacing up and down the room in a state of the utmost excitement and agitation.

“ Good morning, sir,” said Mr. Peter Magnus. “ What do you think of this, sir ? ”

“ Very effective indeed,” replied Mr. Pickwick, surveying the garments of Mr. Peter Magnus with a good-natured smile.

“ Yes, I think it’ll do,” said Mr. Magnus. Mr. Pickwick, sir, I have sent up my card.”

“ Have you ? ” said Mr. Pickwick.

“ And the waiter brought back word that she would see me at eleven—at eleven, sir. It only wants a quarter now.”

“ Very near the time,” said Mr. Pickwick.

“ Yes, it is rather near,” replied Mr. Magnus, “ rather too near to be pleasant—eh ! Mr. Pickwick, sir ? ”

“ Confidence is a great thing in these cases,” observed Mr. Pickwick.

“ I believe it is, sir,” said Mr. Peter Magnus. “ I am very confident, sir. Really, Mr. Pickwick, I do not see why a man should feel any fear in such a case as this, sir. What is it, sir ? There’s nothing to be ashamed of ; it’s a matter of mutual accommodation, nothing more. Husband on one side, wife on the other. That’s my view of the matter, Mr. Pickwick.”

“ It is a very philosophical one,” replied Mr. Pickwick. “ But breakfast is waiting, Mr. Magnus. Come.”

Down they sat to breakfast, but it was evident, notwithstanding the boasting of Mr. Peter Magnus, that he laboured under a very considerable degree of nervousness, of which loss of appetite, a propensity to upset the tea-things, a spectral attempt at drollery, and an irresistible inclination to look at the clock every other second, were among the principal symptoms.

"He—he—he," tittered Mr. Magnus, affecting cheerfulness, and gasping with agitation. "It only wants two minutes, Mr. Pickwick. Am I pale, sir?"

"Not very," replied Mr. Pickwick.

There was a brief pause.

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Pickwick; but have you ever done this sort of thing in your time?" said Mr. Magnus.

"You mean proposing?" said Mr. Pickwick.

"Yes."

"Never," said Mr. Pickwick, with great energy; "never."

"You have no idea, then, how it's best to begin?" said Mr. Magnus.

"Why," said Mr. Pickwick, "I may have formed some ideas upon the subject, but, as I have never submitted them to the test of experience, I should be sorry if you were induced to regulate your proceedings by them."

"I should feel very much obliged to you for any advice, sir," said Mr. Magnus, taking another look at the clock, the hand of which was verging on the five minutes past.

"Well, sir," said Mr. Pickwick, with the profound solemnity with which that great man could, when he pleased, render his remarks so deeply impressive: "I should commence, sir, with a tribute to the lady's beauty and excellent qualities; from them, sir, I should diverge to my own unworthiness."

"Very good," said Mr. Magnus.

"Unworthiness for *her* only, mind, sir," resumed Mr. Pickwick; "for to show that I was not wholly unworthy, sir, I should take a brief review of my past life, and present condition. I should argue, by analogy, that to anybody else, I must be a very desirable object. I should then expatiate on the warmth of my love, and the depth of my devotion. Perhaps I might then be tempted to seize her hand."

"Yes, I see," said Mr. Magnus; "that would be a very great point."

"I should then, sir," continued Mr. Pickwick, growing warmer as the subject presented itself in more glowing colours before him: "I should then, sir, come to the plain and simple question, 'Will you have me?' I think I am justified in assuming that upon this she would turn away her head."

"You think that may be taken for granted?" said Mr. Magnus; "because if she did not do that at the right place it would be embarrassing."

"I think she would," said Mr. Pickwick. "Upon this, sir, I should squeeze her hand, and I think—I *think*, Mr. Magnus—that after I had done that, supposing there was no refusal, I should gently draw away the handkerchief, which my slight knowledge of human nature leads me to suppose the lady would be applying to her eyes at the moment, and steal a respectful kiss. I think I should kiss her, Mr. Magnus; and at this particular point, I am decidedly of opinion that if the lady were going to take me at all, she would murmur into my ears a bashful acceptance."

DOCTOR MARIGOLD.

(*Condensed.*)

PART I

I AM a Cheap Jack, and my own father's name was Willum Marigold. It was in his lifetime supposed by some that his name was William, but my own father always consistently said, No, it was Willum. On which point I content myself with looking at the argument this way: If a man is not allowed to know his own name in a free country, how much is he allowed to know in a land of slavery?

I was born on the Queen's highway; and in consequence of the doctor being a very kind gentleman, and accepting no fee but a tea-tray, I was named Doctor, out of gratitude and compliment to him. There you have me. Doctor Marigold.

The doctor having accepted a tea-tray, you'll guess that my father was a Cheap Jack before me. You are right. He was.

My father had been a lovely one in his time at the Cheap Jack work. Now, I'll tell you what. I mean to go down into my grave declaring that of all the callings ill-used in Great Britain, the Cheap Jack calling is the worst used. Why ain't we a pro-

fession? Why ain't we endowed with privileges? Why are we forced to take out a hawker's license, when no such thing is expected of the political hawkers? Where's the difference betwixt us? Except that we are Cheap Jacks and they are Dear Jacks, I don't see any difference but what's in our favour.

For look here! Say its election time. I am on the footboard of my cart in the market-place, on a Saturday night. I put up a general miscellaneous lot. I say: "Now here, my free and independent woters, I'm a going to give you such a chance as you never had in all your born days, nor yet the days preceding. Now I'll show you what I am a going to do with you. Here's a pair of razors that'll shave you closer than the Board of Guardians; here's a flat-iron worth its weight in gold; here's a frying-pan artificially flavoured with essence of beefsteaks to that degree that you've only got for the rest of your lives to fry bread and dripping in it and there you are replete with animal food; here's a genuine chronometer watch in such a solid silver case that you may knock at the door with it when you come home late from a social meeting, and rouse your wife and family, and save up your knocker for the postman; and here's half-a-dozen dinner plates that you may play the cymbals with to charm the baby with when its fractious. Stop! I'll throw you in another article, and I'll give you that, and it's a rolling-pin; and if the baby can only get it well into its mouth when its teeth is coming and rub the gums once with it, they'll come through double, in a fit of laughter equal to being tickled. Stop again! I'll throw you in another article, because I don't like the looks of you, for you haven't the appearance of buyers unless I lose by you, and because I'd rather lose than not take money to-night, and that's a looking-glass in which you may see how ugly you look when you don't bid. What do you say now? Come! Do you say a pound? Not you, for you haven't got it. Do you say ten shillings? Not you, for you owe more to the tallyman. Well then, I'll tell you what I'll do with you. I'll heap 'em all on the footboard of the cart,—there they are! razors, flat-iron, frying-pan, chronometer watch, dinner plates, rolling-pin, and looking-glass,—take 'em all away for four shillings, and I'll give you sixpence for your trouble!" This is me, the Cheap Jack. But on the Monday morning, in the same market-place, comes the Dear Jack on the hustings—*his* cart—and what does *he* say? "Now my free and independent woters, I am a going to

give you such a chance (he begins just like me) as you never had in all your born days, and that's the chance of sending Myself to Parliament. Now I'll tell you what I am a going to do for you. Here's the interests of this magnificent town promoted above all the rest of the civilised and uncivilised earth. Here's your railways carried, and your neighbour's railways jockeyed. Here's all your sons in the Post-office. Here's Britannia smiling on you. Here's the eyes of Europe on you. Here's universal prosperity for you, repletion of animal food, golden cornfields, gladsome homesteads, and rounds of applause from your own hearts, all in one lot, and that's myself. Will you take me as I stand? You won't. Well, then, I'll tell you what I'll do with you. Come now! I'll throw you in anything you ask for. There! Church-rates, abolition of church-rates, more malt-tax, no malt-tax, universal education to the highest mark, or universal ignorance to the lowest, total abolition of flogging in the army, or a dozen for every private once a month all round, Wrongs of Men or Rights of Women—only say which it shall be, take 'em or leave 'em, and I'm of your opinion altogether, and the lot's your own on your own terms. There! You won't take it yet! Well, then, I'll tell you what I'll do with you. Come! You *are* such free and independent woters, and I *am* so proud of you,—you *are* such a noble and enlightened constituency, and I *am* so ambitious of the honour and dignity of being your member, which is by far the highest level to which the wings of the human mind can soar,—that I'll tell you what I'll do with you. I'll throw you in all the public-houses in your magnificent town for nothing. Will that content you? It won't? You won't take the lot yet? Well, then, before I put the horse in and drive away, and make the offer to the next most magnificent town that can be discovered, I'll tell you what I'll do. Take the lot, and I'll drop two thousand pound in the streets of your magnificent town for them to pick up that can. Not enough? Now look here. This is the very furthest that I'm a going to. I'll make it two thousand five hundred. And still you won't? Here, missis! Put the horse,—no, stop half a moment, I shouldn't like to turn my back upon you neither for a trifle, I'll make it two thousand seven hundred and fifty pound. There! Take the lot on your own terms, and I'll count out two thousand seven hundred and fifty pound on the footboard of the cart, to be dropped in the streets of your magnificent town for them to pick up that can. What do

you say? Come now! You won't do better, and you may do worse. You take it? Hooray! Sold again, and got the seat!"

I courted my wife from the footboard of the cart. I did indeed. I had noticed her up at a window last Saturday that was, appreciating highly. I had took to her, and I had said to myself, "If not already disposed of, I'll have that lot." Next Saturday that come, I pitched the cart on the same pitch, and I was in very high feather indeed, keeping em laughing the whole of the time, and getting off the goods briskly. At last I took out of my waistcoat-pocket a small lot wrapped in soft paper, and I put it this way (looking up at the window where she was):—"Now here, my blooming English maidens, is an article, the last article of the present evening's sale, which I offer to only you, the lovely Suffolk Dumplings biling over with beauty, and I won't take a bid of a thousand pounds for it from any man alive. Now what is it? Why, I'll tell you what it is. It's made of fine gold, and it's not broke, though there's a hole in the middle of it, and it's stronger than any fetter that ever was forged, though its smaller than any finger in my set of ten. Why ten? Because, when my parents made over my property to me, I tell you true, there was twelve sheets, twelve towels, twelve tablecloths, twelve knives, twelve forks, twelve tablespoons, and twelve teaspoons, but my set of fingers were two short of the dozen, and could never since be matched. Now what else is it? Come, I'll tell you? It's a hoop of solid gold. Now, what else is it? It's a man-trap and a handcuff, the parish stocks and a leg-lock, all in gold and all in one. Now what else is it? It's a wedding-ring. Now I'll tell you what I'm a going to do with it. I'm not a going to offer this lot for money; but I mean to give it to the next of you beauties that laughs, and I'll pay her a visit to-morrow morning at exactly half after nine o'clock as the chimes go, and I'll take her out for a walk to put up the banns." *She* laughed, and got the ring handed up to her. When I called in the morning, she says, "O dear! It's never you, and you never mean it?" "It's ever me," says I, "and I am ever yours, and I ever mean it." So we got married, after being put up three times—which by the bye, is quite in the Cheap Jack way again, and shows once more how the Cheap Jack customs pervade society.

She wasn't a bad wife, but she had a temper. If she could have

parted with that one article at a sacrifice, I wouldn't have swopped her away in exchange for any other woman in England. Now thirteen year of temper in a Palace would try the worst of you, but thirteen year of temper in a Cart would try the best of you. You are kept so very close to it in a cart, you see. There's thousands of couples among you getting on like sweet ile upon a whetstone in houses five and six pairs of stairs high, that would go to the Divorce Court in a cart. Violence in a cart is *so* wiolent, and aggrawation in a cart is *so* aggrawating.

We might have had such a pleasant life! But have a temper in the cart, flinging language and the hardest goods in stock at you, and where are you then? Put a name to your feelings.

My dog knew as well when she was on the turn as I did. Before she broke out, he would give a howl, and bolt. How he knew it, was a mystery to me; but the sure and certain knowledge of it would wake him up out of his soundest sleep, and he would give a howl, and bolt. At such times I wished I was him.

The worst of it was, we had a daughter born to us, and I love children with all my heart. When she was in her furies she beat the child.

Little Sophy was so brave! She grew to be quite devoted to her poor father, though he could do so little to help her. She had a wonderful quantity of shining dark hair, all curling natural about her. It is quite astonishing to me now, that I didn't go tearing mad when I used to see her run from her mother before the cart, and her mother catch her by this hair, and pull her down by it, and beat her.

Yet in other respects her mother took great care of her. Our being down in the marsh country in unhealthy weather, I consider the cause of Sophy's taking bad low fever; but however she took it, once she got it she turned away from her mother for evermore, and nothing would persuade her to be touched by her mother's hand. She would shiver and say, "No, no, no," when it was offered at, and would hide her face on my shoulder, and hold me tighter round the neck.

One night at that period of little Sophy's being so bad, I pitched the cart.

I couldn't get the dear child to lie down or leave go of me, and indeed I hadn't the heart to try, so I stepped out on the footboard with her holding round my neck. They all set up a laugh when

they see us, and one chuckle-headed Joskin (that I hated for it) made the bidding, "Tuppence for her!"

"Now, you country boobies," says I, "let's know what you want to-night, and you shall have it. But first of all, shall I tell you why I have got this little girl round my neck? You don't want to know? Then you shall. She belongs to the Fairies. She's a fortune-teller. She can tell me all about you in a whisper, and can put me up to whether you're going to buy a lot or leave it. Now do you want a saw? No, she says you don't, because you're too clumsy to use one. Now I am a going to ask her what you do want.' (Then I whispered, "Your head burns so, that I am afraid it hurts you bad, my pet," and she answered, without opening her heavy eyes, "Just a little, father.") "O! This little fortune-teller says it's a memorandum-book you want. Then why didn't you mention it? Here it is. Look at it. Two hundred superfine hot-pressed wire-wove pages—if you don't believe me, count 'em—ready ruled for your expenses, an everlastingly pointed pencil to put 'em down with, a double-bladed penknife to scratch 'em out with, a book of printed tables to calculate your income with, and a camp-stool to sit down upon while you give your mind to it! Stop! And an umbrella to keep the moon off when you give your mind to it on a pitch dark night. Now I won't ask you how much for the lot, but how little? How little are you thinking of? Don't be ashamed to mention it, because my fortune-teller knows already." (Then making believe to whisper, I kissed her, and she kissed me.) "Why, she says, you are thinking of as little as three and threepence! I couldn't have believed it, even of you, unless she told me. Three and threepence! And a set of printed tables in the lot that'll calculate your income up to forty thousand a year! With an income of forty thousand a year, you grudge three and sixpence. Well then, I'll tell you my opinion. I so despise the threepence, that I'd sooner take three shillings. There. For three shillings, three shillings, three shillings! Gone. Hand 'em over to the lucky man."

As there had been no bid at all, everybody looked about and grinned at everybody, while I touched little Sophy's face and asked her if she felt faint, or giddy. "Not very, father. It will soon be over." Then turning from the pretty patient eyes, which were opened now, and seeing nothing but grins across my lighted grease-pot, I went on again in my Cheap Jack style. "Where's the

butcher?" (My sorrowful eye had just caught sight of a fat young butcher on the outside of the crowd.) "She says the good luck is the butcher's. Where is he?" Everybody handed on the blushing butcher to the front, and there was a roar, and the butcher felt himself obliged to put his hand in his pocket, and take the lot. The party so picked out, in general, does feel obliged to take the lot—good four times out of six. Then we had another lot, the counterpart of that one, and sold it sixpence cheaper, which is always very much enjoyed. It was while the ladies' lot was holding 'em enchained that I felt her lift herself a little on my shoulder, to look across the dark street. "What troubles you, darling?" "Nothing troubles me, father. I am not at all troubled. But don't I see a pretty churchyard over there?" "Yes, my dear." "Kiss me twice, dear father, and lay me down to rest upon that churchyard grass so soft and green." I staggered back into the cart with her head dropped on my shoulder, and I says to her mother, "Quick. Shut the door! Don't let those laughing people see!" "What's the matter?" she cries. "O woman, woman," I tells her, "you'll never catch my little Sophy by her hair again, for she has flown away from you!"

Maybe those were harder words than I meant 'em; but from that time forth my wife took to brooding. And one summer evening, when, as we were coming into Exeter, out of the farther West of England, we saw a woman beating a child in a cruel manner, who screamed, "Don't beat me! O mother, mother, mother!" My wife stopped her ears, and ran away like a wild thing, and next day she was found in the river.

PART II.

I and my dog were all the company left in the cart now; and the dog learned to give a short bark when they wouldn't bid, and to give another and a nod of his head when I asked him, "Who said half a crown? Are you the gentleman, sir, that offered half a crown?" He attained to an immense height of popularity, and I shall always believe taught himself entirely out of his own head to growl at any person in the crowd that bid as low as sixpence. But he got to be well on in years, and one night when I was convulsing York with the spectacles, he took a convulsion on his own account upon the very footboard by me, and it finished him.

Being naturally of a tender turn, I had dreadful lonely feelings on me arter this. I conquered 'em at selling times, having a reputation to keep, but they got me down in private, and rolled upon me. It was under those circumstances that I come acquainted with a giant. And this giant when on view figured as a Roman.

He was a languid young man, which I attribute to the distance between his extremities. He had a little head and less in it, he had weak eyes and weak knees, and altogether you couldn't look at him without feeling that there was greatly too much of him both for his joints and his mind. He was called Rinaldo de Velasco, his name being Pickleson.

This giant, otherwise Pickleson, mentioned to me under the seal of confidence that, beyond his being a burden to himself, his life was made a burden to him by the cruelty of his master towards a step-daughter who was deaf and dumb. Her mother was dead, and she had no living soul to take her part, and was used most hard.

When I heard this account from the giant, otherwise Pickleson, and likewise that the poor girl had beautiful long dark hair, and was often pulled down by it and beaten, I couldn't see the giant through what stood in my eyes. Having wiped 'em, I gave him sixpence (for he was kept as short as he was long).

His master's name was Mim, a very hoarse man, and I knew him to speak to. I went to that Fair as a mere civilian, leaving the cart outside the town, and I looked about the back of the Vans while the performing was going on, and at last, sitting dozing against a muddy cart-wheel, I come upon the poor girl who was deaf and dumb. At the first look I might almost have judged that she had escaped from the Wild Beast Show; but at the second I thought better of her, and thought that if she was more cared for and more kindly used she would be like my child. She was just the same age that my own daughter would have been, if her pretty head had not fell down upon my shoulder that unfortunate night.

To cut it short, I spoke confidential to Mim while he was beating the gong outside betwixt two lots of Pickleson's publics, and I put it to him, "She lies heavy on your hands; what'll you take for her?" His reply was, "A pair of braces." "Now, I'll tell you," says I, "what I'm going to do with you. I'm a going to fetch you half-a-dozen pair of the primest braces in the cart, and then to take

her away with me." Says Mim, "I'll believe it when I've got the goods, and no sooner." I made all the haste I could, lest he should think twice of it, and the bargain was completed.

It was happy days for both of us when Sophy and me began to travel in the cart. I at once give her the name of Sophy, to put her ever towards me in the attitude of my own daughter. We soon made out to begin to understand one another, through the goodness of the Heavens, when she knowed that I meant true and kind by her. In a very little time she was wonderful fond of me. You have no idea what it is to have anybody wonderful fond of you, unless you have been got down and rolled upon by the lonely feelings that I have mentioned as having once got the better of me.

You'd have laughed—or the rewerse—it's according to your disposition—if you could have seen me trying to teach Sophy. At first I was helped—you'd never guess by what—milestones. I got some large alphabets in a box, all the letters separate on bits of bone, and saying we was going to WINDSOR, I give her those letters in that order, and then at every milestone I showed her those same letters in that same order again, and pointed towards the abode of royalty. Another time I give her CART, and then chalked the same upon the cart. Another time I give her DOCTOR MARIGOLD, and hung a corresponding inscription outside my waistcoat. People that met us might stare a bit and laugh, but what did *I* care, if she caught the idea? She caught it after long patience and trouble, and then we did begin to get on swimmingly, I believe you! At first she was given to consider me the cart, and the cart the abode of royalty, but that soon wore off.

The way she learnt to understand any look of mine was truly surprising. When I sold of a night, she would sit in the cart unseen by them outside, and would give a eager look into my eyes when I looked in, and would hand me straight the precise article or articles I wanted. And then she would clap her hands, and laugh for joy.

This happiness went on in the cart till she was sixteen year old. By which time I began to feel not satisfied that I had done my whole duty by her, and to consider that she ought to have better teaching than I could give her. It drew a many tears on both sides when I commenced explaining my views to her; but what's right is right, and you can't neither by tears nor laughter do away with its character.

So I took her hand in mine, and I went with her one day to the Deaf and Dumb Establishment in London, and when the gentleman come to speak to us, I says to him: "Now, I'll tell you what I'll do with you, sir. I am nothing but a Cheap Jack, but of late years I have laid by for a rainy day notwithstanding. This is my only daughter (adopted), and you can't produce a deafer nor a dumber. Teach her the most that can be taught her in the shortest separation that can be named,—state the figure for it,—and I am game to put the money down. I won't bate you a single farthing, sir, but I'll put down the money here and now, and I'll thankfully throw you in a pound to take it. There!" The gentleman smiled, and then, "Well, well," says he, "I must first know what she has learned already. How do you communicate with her?" Then I showed him. "This is most extraordinary," says the gentleman; "is it possible that you have been her only teacher?" "I have been her only teacher, sir," I says, "besides herself." "Then," says the gentleman—and more acceptable words was never spoke to me—"you're a clever fellow, and a good fellow."

"Now, Marigold, tell me what more do you want your adopted daughter to know?"

"I want her, sir, to be cut off from the world as little as can be, considering her deprivations, and therefore to be able to read whatever is wrote with perfect ease and pleasure."

"My good fellow," urges the gentleman, opening his eyes wide, "why *I* can't do that myself! But what do you mean to do with her afterwards? To take her about the country?"

"In the cart, sir, but only in the cart. She will live a private life, you understand, in the cart. I should never think of bringing her infirmities before the public. I wouldn't make a show of her for any money."

The gentleman nodded, and seemed to approve.

"Well," says he, "can you part with her for two years?"

"To do her that good,—yes, sir."

"There's another question," says the gentleman, looking towards her,—“can she part with you for two years?”

I don't know that it was a harder matter of itself (for the other was hard enough to me), but it was harder to get over. However, she was pacified to it at last, and the separation betwixt us was settled. How it cut up both of us when it took place, and when I left her at the door in the dark of an evening, I don't tell. But I

know this ; remembering that night, I shall never pass that same establishment without a heartache and a swelling in the throat ; and I couldn't put you up the best of lots in sight of it with my usual spirit,—for five hundred pound reward from the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and throw in the honour of putting my legs under his mahogany arterwards.

Still, the loneliness that followed in the cart was not the old loneliness, because there was a term put to it, however long to look forward to ; and because I could think, when I was anyways down, that she belonged to me and I belonged to her. Always planning for her coming back, I bought in a few months' time another cart, and what do you think I planned to do with it ? I'll tell you. I planned to fit it up with shelves and books for her reading, and to have a seat in it where I could sit and see her read, and think that I had been her first teacher. Not hurrying over the job, I had the fittings knocked together in contriving ways under my own inspection, and here was her bed in a berth with curtains, and there was her reading-table, and here was her writing-desk, and elsewhere was her books in rows upon rows, picters and no picters, bindings and no bindings, gilt-edged and plain, just as I could pick 'em up for her in lots up and down the country, North and South and West and East, Winds liked best and winds liked least, Here and there and gone astray, Over the hills and far away.

But let me not anticipate. (I take that expression out of a lot of romances I bought for her. I never opened a single one of 'em—and I have opened many—but I found the romancer saying "let me not anticipate." Which being so, I wonder why he did anticipate, or who asked him to it.) Let me not, I say, anticipate.

The two years' time was gone after all the other time before it, and where it's all gone to, who knows ? The new cart was finished,—yellow outside, relieved with wermillion and brass fittings,—the old horse was put in it, a new 'un and a boy being laid on for the Cheap Jack cart,—and I cleaned myself up to go and fetch her.

"Marigold," says the gentleman, giving his hand hearty, "I am very glad to see you."

"Yet I have my doubts, sir," says I, "if you can be half as glad to see me as I am to see you."

"The time has appeared so long,—has it, Marigold ?"

"I won't say that, sir, considering its real length; but—"

"What a start, my good fellow!"

Ah! I should think it was! Grown such a woman, so pretty, so intelligent, so expressive! I knew then that she must be really like my child, or I could never have known her, standing quiet by the door.

"You are affected," says the gentleman in a kindly manner.

"I feel, sir," says I, "that I am but a rough chap in a sleeved waistcoat.

"I feel," says the gentleman, "that it was you who raised her from misery and degradation, and brought her into communication with her kind. But why do we converse alone together, when we can converse so well with her? Address her in your own way."

"I am such a rough chap in a sleeved waistcoat, sir," says I, "and she is such a graceful woman, and she stands so quiet at the door!"

"Try if she moves at the old sign," says the gentleman.

They had got it up together o' purpose to please me! For when I give her the old sign, she rushed to my feet, and dropped upon her knees, holding up her hands to me with pouring tears of love and joy; and when I took her hands and lifted her, she clasped me round the neck, and lay there; and I don't know what a fool I didn't make of myself, until we all three settled down into talking without sound, as if there was a something soft and pleasant spread over the whole world for us.

PART III.

So every item of my plan was crowned with success. Our re-united life was more than all that we had looked forward to. Content and joy went with us as the wheels of the two carts went round, and the same stopped with us when the two carts stopped. I was as pleased and as proud as a Pug-Dog with his muzzle black-leaded for an evening-party, and his tail extra curled by machinery.

We were down at Lancaster, and I had done two nights more than fair average business. Mim's travelling giant, otherwise Pickleson, happened at the self-same time to be a trying it on in the town. The genteel lay was adopted with him. No hint of a van. Green baize alcove leading up to Pickleson in a Auction

Room. Printed poster, "Free list suspended, with the exception of that proud boast of an enlightened country, a free press. Schools admitted by private arrangement. Nothing to raise a blush in the cheek of youth or shock the most fastidious."

I went to the Auction Room in question, and I found it entirely empty of everything but echoes and mouldiness, with the single exception of Pickleson on a piece of red drugget. This suited my purpose, as I wanted a private and confidential word with him, which was: "Pickleson. Owing much happiness to you, I put you in my will for a fypunnote; but, to save trouble, here's fourpunten down, which may equally suit your views, and let us so conclude the transaction." Pickleson, who up to that remark had had the dejected appearance of a long Roman rushlight that couldn't anyhow get lighted, brightened up at his top extremity, and made his acknowledgments in a way which (for him) was parliamentary eloquence.

But what was to the present point in the remarks of the travelling giant, otherwise Pickleson, was this: "Doctor Mari-gold,"—I give his words without a hope of conveying their feebleness,—"who is the strange young man that hangs about your carts?"—"The strange young *man*?" I gives him back, thinking that he meant her, and his languid circulation had dropped a syllable. "Doctor," he returns, with a pathos calculated to draw a tear from even a manly eye, "I am weak, but not so weak yet as that I don't know my words. I repeat them, Doctor. The strange young man." It then appeared that Pickleson, had twice seen hanging about my carts, in that same town of Lancaster where I had been only two nights, this same unknown young man.

It put me rather out of sorts. Towards morning I kept a look out for the strange young man, and—what was more—I saw the strange young man. I sent a hail after him, but he never started or looked round, or took the smallest notice.

We left Lancaster within an hour or two, on our way towards Carlisle. Next morning, at daybreak, I looked out again for the strange man. I did not see him. But next morning I looked out again, and there he was once more. I sent another hail after him, but as before he gave not the slightest sign of being anyways disturbed. This put a thought into my head. Acting on it I watched him in different manners and at different times not

necessary to enter into, till I found that this strange young man was deaf and dumb.

The discovery turned me over, because I knew that a part of that establishment where she had been was allotted to young men (some of them well off), and I thought to myself, "If she favours him, where am I? and where is all that I have worked and planned for?" Hoping—I must confess to the selfishness—that she might *not* favour him, I set myself to find out. At last I was by accident present at a meeting between them in the open air, looking on, leaning behind a fir-tree without their knowing of it. It was a moving meeting for all the three parties concerned. I knew every syllable that passed between them as well as they did. I listened with my eyes, which had come to be as quick and true with deaf and dumb conversation as my ears with the talk of people that can speak. He was a-going out to China as clerk in a merchant's house, which his father had been before him. He was in circumstances to keep a wife, and he wanted her to marry him and go along with him. She persisted; no. He asked if she didn't love him. Yes, she loved him dearly, dearly? but she could never disappoint her beloved, good, noble, generous, and I-don't-know-what-all father (meaning me, the Cheap Jack in the sleeved waistcoat), and she would stay with him, Heaven bless him! though it was to break her heart. Then she cried most bitterly, and that made up my mind.

She had left the young man by that time (for it took a few minutes to get me thoroughly well shook together), and the young man was leaning against another of the fir-trees—of which there was a cluster—with his face upon his arm. I touched him on the back. Looking up and seeing me, he says, in our deaf-and-dumb talk, "Do not be angry."

"I am not angry, good boy. I am your friend. Come with me."

I left him at the foot of the steps of the Library Cart, and I went up alone. She was drying her eyes.

"You have been crying, my dear."

"Yes, father."

"Why?"

"A headache."

"Not a heartache?"

"I said a headache, father."

"Doctor Marigold must prescribe for that headache. The Prescription is here, Sophy."

I brought her young husband in, and I put her hand in his, and my only farther words to both of them were these: "Doctor Marigold's Prescription. To be taken for life." After which I bolted.

When the wedding come off, I mounted a coat (blue, and bright buttons), for the first and last time in all my days, and I give Sophy away with my own hand. There were only us three and the gentleman who had had charge of her for those two years. I give the wedding dinner of four in the Library Cart. Pigeon-pie, a leg of pickled pork, a pair of fowls, and suitable garden stuff. The best of drinks. I give them a speech, and the gentleman give us a speech, and all our jokes told, and the whole went off like a sky-rocket. In the course of the entertainment I explained to Sophy that I should keep the Library Cart as my living-cart when not upon the road, and that I should keep all her books for her just as they stood, till she come back to claim them. So she went to China with her young husband, and it was a parting sorrowful and heavy, and I got the boy I had another service; and so as of old, when my child and wife were gone, I went plodding along alone, with my whip over my shoulder, at the old horse's head.

Sophy wrote me many letters, and I wrote her many letters. About the end of the first year she sent me one in an unsteady hand: "Dearest father, not a week ago I had a darling little daughter, but I am so well that they let me write these words to you. Dearest and best father, I hope my child may not be deaf and dumb, but I do not yet know." When I wrote back, I hinted the question; but as Sophy never answered that question, I felt it to be a sad one, and I never repeated it. For a long time our letters were regular, but then they got irregular, through Sophy's husband being moved to another station, and through my being always on the move. But we were in one another's thoughts, I was equally sure, letters or no letters.

Five years, odd months, had gone since Sophy went away. I was still the King of the Cheap Jacks, and at a greater height of popularity than ever. I had had a first-rate autumn of it, and on the twenty-third of December, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-four, I found myself at Uxbridge, Middlesex, clean sold out. So I joggled up to London with the old horse, light and easy, to

have my Christmas-eve and Christmas-day alone by the fire in the Library Cart.

I am a neat hand at cookery, and I'll tell you what I knocked up for my Christmas-eve dinner in the Library Cart. I knocked up a beefsteak-pudding for one, with two kidneys, a dozen oysters, and a couple of mushrooms thrown in. It's a pudding to put a man in good humour with everything, except the two bottom buttons of his waistcoat. Having relished that pudding and cleared away, I turned the lamp low, and sat down by the light of the fire, watching it as it shone upon the backs of Sophy's books.

Sophy's books so brought up Sophy's self, that I saw her touching face quite plainly, before I dropped off dozing by the fire. This may be a reason why Sophy, with her deaf-and-dumb child in her arms, seemed to stand silent by me all through my nap. Even when I woke with a start, she seemed to vanish, as if she had stood by me in that very place only a single instant before.

I had started at a real sound, and the sound was on the steps of the cart. It was the light hurried tread of a child, coming clambering up. That tread of a child had once been so familiar to me, that for half a moment I believed I was a-going to see a little ghost.

But the touch of a real child was laid upon the outer handle of the door, and the handle turned, and the door opened a little way and a real child peeped in. A bright little comely girl with large dark eyes.

Looking full at me, the tiny creature took off her mite of a straw hat, and a quantity of dark curls fell all about her face. Then she opened her lips, and said in a pretty voice,

"Grandfather!"

"Ah!" I cries out. "She can speak!"

"Yes, dear grandfather. And I am to ask you whether there was ever anyone that I remind you of?"

In a moment Sophy was round my neck, as well as the child, and her husband was a-wringing my hand with his face hid, and we all had to shake ourselves together before we could get over it. And when we did begin to get over it, and I saw the pretty child a-talking, pleased and quick and eager and busy, to her mother, in the signs that I had first taught her mother, the happy and yet pitying tears fell rolling down my face.

MRS. NICKLEBY RECEIVES A PROPOSAL FROM THE GENTLEMAN NEXT DOOR.

(Adapted.)

MRS. NICKLEBY had begun to display an unusual care in the adornment of her person. Even her black dress assumed something of a deadly-lively air from the jaunty style in which it was worn. The gentleman next door had been vilified, rudely stigmatised as a dotard and an idiot; and for these attacks upon his understanding, Mrs. Nickleby was, in some sort, accountable. She felt that the abused gentleman was neither the one nor the other; but that his passion was the most rational in the world, and just the very result of her incautiously displaying her matured charms, without reserve, under the very eye, as it were, of an ardent and too-susceptible man.

On this particular summer-day with which our narrative deals, Mrs. Nickleby and her daughter Kate were seated in the garden summer-house, when a loud "Hem!" which appeared to come from the very foundation of the garden wall, gave both herself and her daughter a violent start.

"Mamma! what was that?" said Kate.

"Upon my word, my dear, unless it was the gentleman belonging to the next house, I don't know what it could possibly——"

"A—hem!" cried the same voice, in a kind of bellow.

"I understand it now, my dear," said Mrs. Nickleby; "don't be alarmed, my love, it's not directed to you, and is not intended to frighten anybody. Let us give everybody their due, Kate; I am bound to say that."

"What do you mean, mamma?"

"Don't be flurried, my dear, for you see I'm not, and if it would be excusable in anybody to be flurried, it certainly would—under all the circumstances—be excusable in me, but I am not, Kate—not at all."

"It seems designed to attract our attention, mamma."

"It is designed to attract our attention, my dear; at least, to attract the attention of one of us. Hem! you needn't be at all uneasy, my dear."

Kate was about to ask for further explanation, when a shouting and scuffling noise, as of an elderly gentleman whooping, and kicking up his legs on loose gravel, with great violence, was heard, and a large cucumber was seen to shoot up in the air with the velocity of a sky-rocket, tumbling over and over, until it fell at Mrs. Nickleby's feet. Then a fine vegetable marrow; then several cucumbers shot up together; and, finally, the air was darkened by a shower of onions, turnip-radishes, and other small vegetables, which fell rolling, and scattering, and bumping about, in all directions.

As Kate caught her mother's hand to run with her into the house, she felt herself rather retarded than assisted in her intention; and, following the direction of Mrs. Nickleby's eyes, was quite terrified by the apparition of an old black velvet cap, which rose above the wall, and was gradually followed by a very large head, and an old face, in which were a pair of most extraordinary gray eyes: very wild, very wide open, and rolling in their sockets, with a dull, languishing, leering look, most ugly to behold.

"Mamma! why do you stop, why do you lose an instant? Mamma, pray come in!"

"Kate, my dear, how can you be so foolish? What do you want, sir?" said Mrs. Nickleby, addressing the intruder with a sort of simpering displeasure. "How dare you look into this garden?"

"Queen of my soul," replied the stranger, "this goblet sip?"

"Nonsense, sir," said Mrs. Nickleby. "Kate, my love, pray be quiet."

"Won't you sip the goblet?" urged the stranger, with his right hand on his breast. "Oh, do sip the goblet!"

"I shall not consent to do anything of the kind, sir. Pray, begone."

"Why is it that beauty is always obdurate, even when admiration is as honourable and respectful as mine?" Here the old gentleman smiled, kissed his hand, and made several low bows. "Is it owing to the bees, who, when the honey season is over, and they are supposed to have been killed with brimstone, in reality fly to Barbary and lull the captive Moors to sleep with their drowsy songs? Or is it in consequence of the statue at Charing Cross having been lately seen, on the Stock Exchange at midnight, walking arm-in-arm with the Pump from Aldgate, in a riding-habit?"

"Mamma," murmured Kate, "do you hear him?"

"Hush, my dear!" replied Mrs. Nickleby, "he is very polite, and I think that was a quotation from the poets. Pray, don't worry me so, you'll pinch my arm black and blue. Go away, sir!"

"Quite away? Oh! quite away?"

"Yes, certainly. You have no business here. This is private property, sir; you ought to know that."

"I do know," said the old gentleman, laying his finger on his nose, "that this is a sacred and enchanted spot, where the most divine charms waft mellifluousness over the neighbours' gardens, and force the fruit and vegetables into premature existence. That fact I am acquainted with. But will you permit me, fairest creature, to ask you one question, in the absence of the planet Venus, who has gone on business to the Horse Guards, and would otherwise—jealous of your superior charms—interpose between us?"

"If you will conduct yourself, sir, like the gentleman I should imagine you to be, from your language, and—and—appearance (quite the counterpart of your grandpapa Kate, my dear, in his best days), and will put your question to me in plain words, I will answer it."

"The question is—Are you a princess?"

"You are mocking me, sir."

"No, but are you?"

"You know I am not, sir."

"Then are you any relation to the Archbishop of Canterbury? or to the Pope of Rome? or the Speaker of the House of Commons? Forgive me, if I am wrong, but I was told that you were niece to the Commissioners of Paving, and daughter-in-law to the Lord Mayor and Court of Common Council, which would account for your relationship to all three."

"Whoever has spread such reports, sir, has taken great liberties with my name, and one which I am sure my son Nicholas, if he was aware of it, would not allow for an instant. The idea, niece to the Commissioners of Paving!"

"Pray, mamma, come away!" whispered Kate.

"'Pray, mamma!' Nonsense, Kate; but that's just the way. If they had said I was niece to a piping bullfinch, what would you care! But I have no sympathy," whimpered Mrs. Nickleby; "I don't expect it, that's one thing."

"Tears!" cried the old gentleman, with such an energetic jump that he fell down two or three steps, and grated his chin against the wall. "Catch the crystal globules—catch 'em—bottle 'em up—cork 'em tight—put sealing-wax on the top—seal 'em with a cupid—label 'em 'Best quality'—and stow 'em away in the fourteen bin, with a bar of iron on the top to keep the thunder off!"

He issued these commands as if there were a dozen attendants all actively engaged in their execution, and then continued:

"Beautiful madam, if I have made any mistake with regard to your family or connexions, I humbly beseech you to pardon me. If I supposed you to be related to Foreign Powers or Native Boards, it is because you have a manner, a carriage, a dignity, which you will excuse my saying that none but yourself (with the single exception, perhaps, of the tragic muse, when playing extemporaneously on the barrel-organ before the East India Company) can parallel. I am not a youth, ma'am, as you see; and although beings like you can never grow old, I venture to presume that we are fitted to each other."

"Really, Kate, my love!" said Mrs. Nickleby, faintly, and looking another way.

"I have estates, ma'am; jewels, light-houses, fish-ponds, a whalery of my own in the North Sea, and several oyster-beds of great profit in the Pacific Ocean. If you will have the kindness to step down to the Royal Exchange and to take the cocked hat off the stoutest beadle's head, you will find my card in the lining of the crown, wrapped up in a piece of blue paper. My walking-stick is also to be seen on application to the chaplain of the House of Commons, who is strictly forbidden to take any money for showing it. I have enemies, ma'am, who attack me on all occasions, and wish to secure my property. If you bless me with your hand and heart, you can apply to the Lord Chancellor or call out the military if necessary—sending my tooth-pick to the Commander-in-chief will be sufficient—and so clear the house of them before the ceremony is performed. After that, love, bliss, and rapture; rapture, love, and bliss. Be mine, be mine!"

"Kate, my dear," said Mrs. Nickleby, "I have hardly the power to speak; but it is necessary for the happiness of all parties that this matter should be set at rest for ever."

"Surely there is no necessity for you to say one word, mamma?"

"You will allow me, my dear, if you please, to judge for myself."

"Be mine, be mine!" cried the old gentleman.

"It can scarcely be expected, sir, that I should tell a stranger whether I feel flattered or obliged by such proposals, or not. They certainly are made under very singular circumstances; still at the same time, as far as it goes, and to a certain extent of course, they must be gratifying and agreeable to one's feelings."

"Be mine, be mine!" cried the old gentleman. "Gog and Magog, Gog and Magog. Be mine, be mine!"

"It will be sufficient for me to say, sir, and I'm sure you'll see the propriety of taking an answer and going away—that I have made up my mind to remain a widow and to devote myself to my children. You may not suppose that I am the mother of two children—indeed many people have doubted it, and said that nothing on earth could ever make 'em believe it possible—but it is the case, and they are both grown up. As to my being young enough to marry again, that perhaps may be so, or it may not be; but I couldn't think of it for an instant, not on any account whatever. I said I never would, and I never will."

Towards the conclusion of these observations, the suitor evinced a very irreverent degree of inattention, and Mrs. Nickleby had scarcely finished speaking, when, to the great terror both of that lady and her daughter, he suddenly flung off his coat, and springing on the top of the wall, threw himself into an attitude which displayed his small-clothes and gray worsteds to the fullest advantage, and concluded by standing on one leg, and repeating his favourite bellow with increased vehemence.

While he was still dwelling on the last note, a dirty hand was observed to glide stealthily and swiftly along the top of the wall, as if in pursuit of a fly, and then to clasp with the utmost dexterity one of the old gentleman's ankles. This done, the companion hand appeared, and clasped the other ankle.

Thus encumbered the old gentleman, looking down on his own side of the wall, burst into a loud laugh, saying—"It's you, is it?"

"Yes, it's me," replied a gruff voice.

"How's the Emperor of Tartary?"

"Oh! he's much the same as usual. No better and no worse."

"The young Prince of China. Is he reconciled to his father-in-law, the great potato salesman?"

"No; and he says he never will be, that's more."

"If that's the case, perhaps I'd better come down."

"Well, I think you had, perhaps."

One of the hands being then cautiously unclasped, the old gentleman dropped into a sitting posture, and was looking round to smile and bow to Mrs. Nickleby, when he disappeared with some precipitation, as if his legs had been pulled from below.

Very much relieved by his disappearance, Kate was turning to speak to her mamma, when the dirty hands again became visible, and were immediately followed by the figure of a coarse squat man.

"Beg your pardon, ladies. Has he been making love to either of you?"

"Yes," said Kate.

"Ah!" he always will, you know. Nothing will prevent his making love."

"I need not ask you if he is out of his mind, poor creature."

"Why no. That's pretty plain, that is."

"Has he been long so?"

"A long while."

"And is there no hope for him?"

"Not a bit, and don't deserve to be. He's a deal pleasanter without his senses than with 'em. He was the cruellest, wickedest, out-and-outerest old flint that ever drawed breath. Broke his poor wife's heart, turned his daughters out of doors, drove his sons into the streets—it was a blessing he went mad at last, through evil tempers, and covetousness, and selfishness, and guzzling, and drinking, or he'd have drove many others so."

The keeper shook his head, descended the ladder, and took it away.

"Poor creature!" said Kate.

"Ah! poor indeed!" rejoined Mrs. Nickleby. "It's shameful that such things should be allowed—shameful!"

"How can they be helped, mamma? The infirmities of nature——"

"Nature!" said Mrs. Nickleby. "What! Do you suppose this poor gentleman is out of his mind?"

"Can anybody who sees him entertain any other opinion, mamma?"

"Why, then, I just tell you this, Kate, that he is nothing of the kind, and I am surprised you can be so imposed upon. It's some plot of these people to possess themselves of his property—didn't he

say so himself? He may be a little odd and fidgety, perhaps, many of us are that; but downright mad! and express himself as he does, respectfully, and in quite poetical language, and making offers with so much thought, and care, and prudence—not as if he ran into the streets, and went down upon his knees to the first chit of a girl he met, as a madman would! No, no, Kate, there's a great deal too much method in *his* madness; depend upon that, my dear."

BOOTS AT THE HOLLY-TREE INN.

(Adapted.)

I WAS once snowed up at the Holly-Tree Inn, and while there asked the Boots to come up to my room—to take a chair—and to talk to me.

Where had he been in his time? Boots repeated, when I asked him the question. He had been everywhere! And what had he been? Bless you, he had been everything you could mention a'most!

Seen a good deal? Why, of course he had. I should say so, he could assure me, if I only knew a twentieth part of what had come in *his* way. Why, it would be easier for him, he expected, to tell what he hadn't seen than what he had. Ah! a deal, it would.

What was the curiousest thing he had seen? Well! he didn't know. He couldn't momentarily name what was the curiousest thing he had seen—unless it was a Unicorn—and he see *him* once at a Fair. But supposing a young gentleman not eight year old was to run away with a fine young woman of seven, might I think *that* a queer start? Certainly. Then that was a start as he himself had had his blessed eyes on, and he had cleaned the shoes they run away in—and they was so little that he couldn't get his hand into em.

Master Harry Walmers' father, you see, he lived at the Elmses, six or seven miles from Lunnon. He was a gentleman of spirit, and good-looking. He was uncommon proud of Master Harry as was his only child; but he didn't spoil him neither. He was a gentleman that had a will of his own and a eye of his own, and that would be minded. Consequently, though he made quite a companion of the fine bright boy, and was delighted to see him so fond

of reading his fairy books, and was never tired of hearing him say my name is Norval, or hearing him sing his songs about Young May Moons is beaming love, and When he as adores thee has left but the name, and that; still he kept the command over the child, and the child *was* a child, and it's to be wished more of 'em was!

How did Boots happen to know all this? "Why, through being under-gardener. Of course I couldn't be under-gardener, and be always about, in the summer-time, without getting acquainted with the ways of the family. Even supposing Master Harry had'n't come to me one morning early, and said, 'Cobbs, how should you spell Norah, if you was asked?' and then he began cutting it in print all over the fence.

"Couldn't say I had taken particular notice of children before that," Boots continued, "but really it was pretty to see them two mites a going about the place together, deep in love. And the courage of the boy! He'd have throwed off his little hat, and tucked up his little sleeves, and gone in at a Lion. One day he stops, along with her, where I was hoeing weeds in the gravel, and says, speaking up, 'Cobbs,' he says, 'I like *you*.' 'Do you, sir? I'm proud to hear it.' 'Yes, I do, Cobbs. Why do I like you, do you think, Cobbs?' 'Don't know, Master Harry, I am sure.' 'Because Norah likes you, Cobbs.' 'Indeed, sir? That's very gratifying.' 'Gratifying, Cobbs? It's better than millions of the brightest diamonds to be liked by Norah.' 'Certainly, sir.' 'You're going away, ain't you, Cobbs?' 'Yes, sir.' 'Would you like another situation, Cobbs?' 'Well, sir, I shouldn't object, if it was a good 'un.' 'Then, Cobbs,' says he, 'you shall be our Head Gardener when we are married.' And he tucks her, in her little sky-blue mantle, under his arm, and walks away.

"I can assure you, sir, it was better than a picter, and equal to a play, to see them babies, with their long, bright, curling hair, their sparkling eyes, and their beautiful light tread, a rambling about the garden, deep in love. I'm of opinion that the birds believed they was birds, and kept up with 'em, singing to please 'em. Sometimes they would creep under the Tulip-tree, and would sit there with their arms round one another's necks, and their soft cheeks touching, a reading about the Prince and the Dragon, and the good and bad enchanters, and the king's fair daughter. Sometimes I'd hear them planning about having a house in a forest, keeping bees and a cow, and living entirely on

milk and honey. Once I came upon them by the pond, and heard Master Harry say, 'Adorable Norah, kiss me, and say you love me to distraction, or I'll jump in head-foremost.' On the whole, it had a tendency to make me feel as if I was in love myself—only I didn't exactly know who with.

"'Cobbs,' said Master Harry, one evening, 'I am going on a visit, this present Midsummer, to my grandmamma's at York.'

"'Are you indeed, sir? I hope you'll have a pleasant time. I am going into Yorkshire, myself, when I leave here.'

"'Are you going to your grandmamma's, Cobbs?'

"'No, sir. I haven't got such a thing.'

"'Not as a grandmamma, Cobbs?'

"'No, sir.'

"'I shall be very glad indeed to go, Cobbs,—Norah's going.'

"'You'll be all right then, sir, with your beautiful sweetheart by your side.'

"'Cobbs, I never let anybody joke about it, when I can prevent them.'

"'It wasn't a joke, sir—wasn't so meant.'

"'I am glad of that, Cobbs, because I like you, you know, and you're going to live with us,—Cobbs!'

"'Sir.'

"'What do you think my grandmamma gives me when I go down there?'

"'I couldn't so much as make a guess, sir.'

"'A Bank of England five-pound note, Cobbs.'

"'Whew! that's a spanking sum of money, Master Harry.'

"'A person could do a good deal with such a sum of money as that—couldn't a person, Cobbs?'

"'I believe you, sir!'

"'Cobbs, I'll tell you a secret. At Norah's house, they have been joking her about me, and pretending to laugh at our being engaged—pretending to make game of it, Cobbs!'

"'Such, sir, is the depravity of human natur.'

"The boy, looking exactly like his father, stood for a few minutes with his glowing face towards the sunset, and then departed with, 'Good-night, Cobbs. I'm going in.'

"If you was to ask me how it happened that I was a-going to leave that place just at that present time, well, I couldn't rightly answer you. I do suppose I might have stayed there till now

if I had been anyways inclined. But, you see, I was younger then, and I wanted change. That's what I wanted—change. Mr. Walmers, he said to me when I gave him notice of my intentions to leave, 'Cobbs,' he says, 'have you anything to complain of? I make the inquiry because if I find that any of my people really has anything to complain of, I wish to make it right if I can.' 'No, sir,' says I, 'thanking you, sir, I find myself as well sitiuated here as I could hope to be anywheres. The truth is, sir, that I'm a-going to seek my fortun'.' 'O, indeed, Cobbs!' he says; 'I hope you may find it.' And I can assure you I haven't found it yet.

"Well, sir! I left the Elmses when my time was up, and Master Harry, he went down to the old lady's at York, which old lady would have given that child the teeth out of her head (if she had had any), she was so wrapped up in him. What does that Infant do—for Infant you may call him and be within the mark—but cut away from that old lady's with his Norah, on a expedition to go to Gretna Green and be married!

"Sir, I was at this identical Holly-Tree Inn, when, one summer afternoon, the coach drives up, and out of the coach gets them two children. The Guard says to our Governor, 'I don't quite make out these little passengers, but the young gentleman's words was, that they was to be brought here.' The young gentleman gets out; hands his lady out; gives the Guard something for himself; says to our Governor, 'We're to stop here to-night, please. Sitting-room and two bed-rooms will be required. Chops and cherry-pudding for two!' and tucks her, in her little sky-blue mantle, under his arm, and walks into the house much bolder than Brass.

"I leave you to judge what the amazement of that establishment was, when these two tiny creatures all alone by themselves was marched into the Angel—much more so, when I, who had seen them without their seeing me, give the Governor my views of the expedition they was upon. 'Cobbs,' says the Governor, 'if this is so, I must set off myself to York, and quiet their friends' minds. In which case you must keep your eye upon 'em, and humour 'em, till I come back. But before I take these measures, Cobbs, I should wish you to find from themselves whether your opinion is correct.' 'Sir, to you,' says I, 'that shall be done directly.'

"So I go up-stairs to the Angel, and there I finds Master Harry on a e-normous sofa—immense at any time, but looking like the Great Bed of Ware, compared with him—a drying the eyes of Miss Norah with his pocket-handkercher. Their little legs was entirely off the ground, of course, and it really is not possible for me to express to you how small them children looked.

"'It's Cobbs! It's Cobbs!' cries Master Harry, and comes running to me, and catching hold of my hand. Miss Norah comes running to me on t'other side and, catching hold of my t'other hand, they both jump for joy.

"'I see you a getting out, sir. I thought it was you. I thought I couldn't be mistaken in your height and figure. What's the object of your journey, sir?—Matrimonial?'

"'We are going to be married, Cobbs, at Gretna Green. We have run away on purpose. Norah has been in rather low spirits, Cobbs; but she'll be happy, now we have found you to be our friend.'

"'Thank you, sir, and thank *you*, miss, for your good opinion. *Did* you bring any luggage with you, sir?'

"'If you will believe me, sir, when I give you my word and honour upon it, the lady had got a parasol, a smelling-bottle, a round and a half of cold buttered toast, eight peppermint drops, and a hair brush—seemingly a doll's. The gentleman had got about half a dozen yards of string, a knife, three or four sheets of writing-paper folded up surprising small, a orange, and a Chaney mug with his name upon it.

"'What may be the exact natur of your plans, sir?' says I.

"'To go on,' replied the boy—which the courage of that boy was something wonderful!—'in the morning, and be married to-morrow.'

"'Just so, sir. Would it meet your views, sir, if I was to accompany you?'

"'When I said this, they both jumped for joy again, and cried out, 'Oh, yes, yes, Cobbs! Yes!'

"'Well, sir, if you will excuse my having the freedom to give an opinion, what I should recommend would be this. I'm acquainted with a pony, sir, which, put in a pheayton that I could borrow, would take you and Mrs. Harry Walmers, Junior (myself driving, if you approved), to the end of your journey in a very short space of time. I am not altogether sure, sir, that

this pony will be at liberty to-morrow, but even if you had to wait over to-morrow for him, it might be worth your while. As to the small account here, sir, in case you was to find yourself running at all short, that don't signify ; because I'm a part proprietor of this inn, and it could stand over.'

"I assure you, sir, that when they clapped their hands, and jumped for joy again, and called me 'Good Cobbs !' and 'Dear Cobbs !' and bent across me to kiss one another in the delight of their confiding hearts, I felt myself the meanest rascal for deceiving 'em that ever was born.

" 'Is there anything you want just at present, sir ? ' says I.

" 'We should like some cakes after dinner,' answered Master Harry, 'and two apples—and jam. With dinner we should like to have toast-and-water. But Norah has always been accustomed to half a glass of currant wine at dessert. And so have I.'

" 'It shall be ordered at the bar, sir,' says I ; and away I went.

"I have the feeling as fresh upon me at this minute of speaking as I had then, that I would far rather have had it out in half a dozen rounds with the Governor than have combined with him ; and that I wish with all my heart there was any impossible place where those two babies could make an impossible marriage, and live impossibly happy ever afterwards. However, as it couldn't be, I went into the Governor's plans, and the Governor set off for York in half an hour.

"The way in which the women of that house—without exception—every one of 'em—married *and* single—took to that boy when they heard the story, was surprising. It was as much as I could do to keep 'em from dashing into the room and kissing him. They was seven deep at the keyhole.

"In the evening, I went into the room to see how the runaway couple was getting on. The gentleman was on the window-seat, supporting the lady in his arms. She had tears upon her face, and was lying, very tired and half asleep, with her head upon his shoulder.

" 'Mrs. Harry Walmers, Junior, fatigued, sir ? ' says I.

" 'Yes, she is tired, Cobbs ; but she is not used to be away from home, and she has been in low spirits again. Cobbs, do you think you could bring a biffin, please ?'

" 'I ask your pardon, sir. What was it you——?'

“‘I think a Norfolk biffin would rouse her, Cobbs. She is very fond of them.’

“I withdrew in search of the required restorative, and, when I brought it in, the gentleman handed it to the lady, and fed her with a spoon, and took a little himself; the lady being heavy with sleep, and rather cross. ‘What should you think, sir,’ says I, ‘of a chamber candlestick?’ The gentleman approved; the chambermaid went first, up the great staircase; the lady, in her sky-blue mantle, followed, gallantly escorted by the gentleman; the gentleman embraced her at her door, and retired to his own apartment, where I softly locked him up.

“I couldn’t but feel with increased acuteness what a base deceiver I was, when they consulted me at breakfast (they had ordered sweet milk and water, and toast and currant jelly, overnight) about the pony. It really was as much as I could do—I don’t mind confessing to you—to look them two young things in the face, and think what a wicked old father of lies I had grown up to be. Howsoever, I went on a lying like a Trojan about the pony. I told ’em that it did so unfort’nately happen that the pony was half clipped, you see, and that he couldn’t be taken out in that state, for fear it should strike to his inside. But that he’d be finished clipping in the course of the day, and that to-morrow morning at eight o’clock the pheayton would be ready. My view of the whole case, looking back on it in my room, is, that Mrs. Harry Walmers, Junior, was beginning to give in. She hadn’t had her hair curled when she went to bed, and she didn’t seem quite up to brushing it herself, and its getting in her eyes put her out. But nothing put out Master Harry. He sat behind his breakfast-cup, a tearing away at the jelly, as if he had been his own father.

“After breakfast, I’m inclined to consider that they drewed soldiers—at least, I know many such was found in the fireplace, all on horseback. In the course of the morning, Master Harry rang the bell—it was surprising how that there boy did carry on—and said, in a sprightly way, ‘Cobbs, is there any good walks in this neighbourhood?’

“‘Yes, sir,’ says I. ‘There’s Love-lane.’

“‘Get out with you, Cobbs!’—that was that there boy’s expression—‘you’re joking.’

“‘Begging your pardon, sir,’ says I, ‘there really is Love-lane.’

And a pleasant walk it is, and proud shall I be to show it to yourself and Mrs. Harry Walmers, Junior.'

" 'Norah, dear,' said Master Harry, 'this is curious. We really ought to see Love-lane. Put on your bonnet, my sweetest darling, and we will go there with Cobbs.'

I leave you to judge what a beast I felt myself to be, when that young pair told me, as all three jogged along together, that they had made up their minds to give me two thousand guineas a year as head-gardener, on account of my being so true a friend to 'em. I could have wished at the moment that the earth would have opened and swallowed me up, I felt so mean, with their beaming eyes a looking at me, and believing me. Well, sir, I turned the conversation as well as I could, and I took 'em down Love-lane to the water-meadows, and there Master Harry would have drowned himself in half a moment more, a getting out a water-lily for her—but nothing daunted that boy. Well, sir, they was tired out. All being so new and strange to 'em, they was tired as tired could be. And they laid down on a bank of daisies, like the children in the wood, leastways meadows, and fell asleep.

"I don't know—perhaps I do—but never mind, it don't signify either way—why it made a man fit to make a fool of himself to see them two pretty babies a lying there in the clear still sunny day, not dreaming half so hard when they was asleep as they done when they was awake. But when you come to think of yourself, you know, and what a game you have been up to ever since you was in your own cradle, and what a poor sort of a chap you are, and how it's always either Yesterday with you, or else Tomorrow, and never To-day, that's where it is!

"Well, sir, they woke up at last, and then one thing was getting pretty clear to me, namely, that Mrs. Harry Walmerses, Junior's, temper was on the move. When Master Harry took her round the waist, she said he 'teased her so;' and when he says, 'Norah, my young May Moon, your Harry tease you?' she tells him, 'Yes; and I want to go home!'

"A biled fowl, and baked bread-and-butter pudding, brought Mrs. Walmers up a little; but I could have wished, I must privately own to you, sir, to have seen her more sensible of the voice of love, and less abandoning of herself to currants. However, Master Harry he kept up, and his noble heart was as fond as ever. Mrs. Walmers turned very sleepy about dusk, and began to cry. There-

fore, Mrs. Walmers went off to bed as per yesterday; and Master Harry ditto repeated.

"About eleven or twelve at night comes back the Governor in a chaise, along with Mr. Walmers and a elderly lady. Mr. Walmers looks amused and very serious, both at once, and says to our missis, 'We are much indebted to you, ma'am, for your kind care of our little children, which we can never sufficiently acknowledge. Pray, ma'am, where is my boy?' Our missis says, 'Cobbs has the dear child in charge, sir. Cobbs, show Forty!' Then he says to me, 'Ah, Cobbs, I am glad to see *you*! I understood you was here!' And I says, 'Yes, sir. Your most obedient, sir.'

"You may be surprised to hear me say it, perhaps; but I assure you that my heart beat like a hammer, going up stairs. 'I beg your pardon, sir,' says I, while unlocking the door; 'I hope you are not angry with Master Harry. For Master Harry's a fine boy, sir, and will do you credit and honour.' And if the fine boy's father had contradicted me in the daring state of mind in which I then was, I think I should have fetched him a crack, and taken the consequences.

"But Mr. Walmers only says, 'No, Cobbs. No, my good fellow. Thank you!' And, the door being opened, goes in.

"I go in too, holding the light, and I see Mr. Walmers go up to the bedside, bend gently down, and kiss the little sleeping face. Then he stands looking at it for a minute, looking wonderfully like it (they do say he ran away with Mrs. Walmers); and then he gently shakes the little shoulder.

"'Harry, my dear boy! Harry!'

"Master Harry starts up and looks at him. Looks at me too. Such is the honour of that mite, that he looks at me, to see whether he has brought me into trouble.

"'I am not angry, my child. I only want you to dress yourself and come home.'

"'Yes, pa.'

"Master Harry dresses himself quickly. His breast begins to swell when he has nearly finished, and it swells more and more as he stands, at last, a looking at his father: his father standing a looking at him, the quiet image of him.

"'Please may I'—the spirit of that little creatur, and the way he kept his rising tears down!—'please, dear pa—may I—kiss Norah before I go?'

“ ‘ You may, my child.’

“ So he takes Master Harry in his hand, and I lead the way with the candle, and they come to that other bedroom, where the elderly lady is seated by the bed, and poor little Mrs. Harry Walmers, Junior, is fast asleep. There the father lifts the child up to the pillow, and he lays his little face down for an instant by the little warm face of poor unconscious little Mrs. Harry Walmers, Junior, and gently draws it to him—a sight so touching to the chambermaids who are peeping through the door, that one of them calls out, ‘ It’s a shame to part ’em ! ’

“ Finally, that’s all about it. Mr. Walmers drove away in the chaise, having hold of Master Harry’s hand. The elderly lady and Mrs. Harry Walmers, Junior, that never was to be (she married a Captain long afterwards, and died in India), went off next day. In conclusion, I put it to you whether you, sir, hold with me in two opinions: firstly, that there are not many couples on their way to be married who are half as innocent as those two children; secondly, that it would be a jolly good thing for a great many couples on their way to be married, if they could only be stopped in time, and brought back separate.”

[By kind permission of Messrs. Chapman and Hall.]

THE DEATH OF JO.

To the few who do not know Jo’s antecedents, the following description of the poor little street Arab—in Mr. Dickens’ own words—will prove of interest:—“ Here he is, very muddy, very hoarse, very ragged. Name, Jo. Nothing else that he knows on. Don’t know that everybody has two names. Never heard of sich a think. Don’t know that Jo is short for a longer name—thinks it long enough for *him*. *He* don’t find no fault with it. Spell it? No. *He* can’t spell it. No father, no mother, no friends. Never been to school. Knows a broom’s a broom, and knows it’s wicked to tell a lie.”

Jo is very glad to see his old friend; and says, when they are left alone, that he takes it uncommon kind as Mr. Sangsby should come so far out of his way on accounts of sich as him. Mr. Snagsby, touched by the spectacle before him, immediately lays upon the table half-a-crown: that magic balsam of his for all kinds of wounds.

“ And how do you find yourself, my poor lad? ” inquires the stationer, with his cough of sympathy.

"I am in luck, Mr. Sangsby, I am," returns Jo, "and don't want for nothink. I'm more cumfbler nor you can't think. Mr. Sangsby! I'm wery sorry that I done it, but I didn't go fur to do it, sir."

The stationer softly lays down another half-crown, and asks him what it is that he is sorry for having done?

"Mr. Sangsby," says Jo, "I went and giv a illness to the lady as wos and yit as warn't the t'other lady, and none of 'em never says nothink to me for having done it, on accounts of their being ser good and my having been s' unfortnet. The lady come herself and see me yesday, and she ses, 'Ah Jo!' she ses. 'We thought we'd lost you, Jo!' she ses. And she sits down a smilin so quiet, and don't pass a word nor yit a look upon me for having done it, she don't, and I turns agin the wall, I doos, Mr. Sangsby. And Mr. Jarnders, I see him a forced to turn away his own self. And Mr. Woodcot, he come fur to giv me somethink fur to ease me, wot he's allus a doin on day and night, and wen he come a bendin over me and a speakin up so bold, I see his tears a fallin, Mr. Sangsby."

The softened stationer deposits another half-crown on the table. Nothing less than a repetition of that infallible remedy will relieve his feelings.

"Wot I wos a thinkin on, Mr. Sangsby," proceeds Jo, "wos, as you wos able to write wery large, p'raps?"

"Yes, Jo, please God," returns the stationer.

"Uncommon precious large, p'raps?" says Jo, with eagerness.

"Yes, my poor boy."

Jo laughs with pleasure. "Wot I wos a thinkin on then, Mr. Sangsby, wos, that when I wos moved on as fur as ever I could go and couldn't be moved no funder, whether you might be so good p'raps, as to write out, wery large so that anyone could see it anywheres, as that I wos wery truly hearty sorry that I done it and that I never went fur to do it; and that though I didn't know nothink at all, I knowd as Mr. Woodcot once cried over it and wos allus grieved over it, and that I hoped as he'd be able to forgive me in his mind. If the writin could be made to say it wery large, he might."

"It shall say it, Jo. Very large."

Jo laughs again. "Thank'ee, Mr. Sangsby. It's wery kind of you, sir, and it makes me more cumfbler nor I was afore."

The meek little stationer, with a broken and unfinished cough, slips down his fourth half-crown—he has never been so close to a case requiring so many—and is fain to depart. And Jo and he, upon this little earth, shall meet no more. No more.

For the cart so hard to draw, is near its journey's end, and drags over stony ground. All round the clock, it labours up the broken steep, shattered and worn. Not many times can the sun rise, and behold it still upon its weary road. Ah, no! it has very nearly given up, but labours on a little more.

The trooper stands in the doorway, still and silent. Phil has stopped in a low, clinking noise, with his little hammer in his hand. Mr. Woodcourt looks round with that grave professional interest and attention on his face, and, glancing significantly at the trooper, signs to Phil to carry his table out. When the little hammer is next used, there will be a speck of rust upon it.

"Well, Jo! What is the matter? Don't be frightened."

"I thought," says Jo, who has started, and is looking round, "I thought I was in Tom-all-Alone's agin. Ain't there nobody here but you, Mr. Woodcot?"

"Nobody."

"And I ain't took back to Tom-all-Alone's. Am I, sir?"

"No." Jo closes his eyes, muttering, "I'm wery thankful."

After watching him closely a little while, Allan puts his mouth very near his ear, and says to him, in a low, distinct voice,

"Jo! Did you ever know a prayer?"

"Never knowd nothink, sir."

"Not so much as one short prayer?"

"No, sir. Nothing at all. Mr. Chadbands he was a prayin wunst at Mr. Sangsby's and I heerd him, but he sounded as if he was a speakin' to hisself, and not to me. He prayed a lot, but I couldn't make out nothink on it. Different times, there was other genlmen come down Tom-all-Alone's a prayin, but they all mostly sed as the t'other wuns prayed wrong, and all mostly sounded to be a talking to theirselves, or a passing blame on the t'others, and not a talkin to us. We never knowd nothink. I never knowd what it was all about."

It takes him a long time to say this; and few but an experienced and attentive listener could hear, or hearing, understand him. After a short relapse into sleep or stupor, he makes of a sudden a strong effort to get out of bed.

"Stay, Jo! What now?"

"It's time for me to go to that there berryin ground, sir," he returns, with a wild look.

"Lie down and tell me. What burying ground, Jo?"

"Where they laid him as wos wery good to me, wery good to me indeed, he wos. It's time fur me to go down to that there berryin ground, sir, and ask to be put along with him. I wants to go there and be berried. He used fur to say to me, 'I am as poor as you to-day, Jo,' he ses. I wants to tell him that I am as poor as him now, and have come there to be laid along with him."

"By-and-by, Jo. By-and-by."

"Ah! P'raps they wouldn't do it if I wos to go myself. But will you promise to have me took there, sir, and laid along with him."

"I will, indeed."

"Thank'ee, sir. Thank'ee, sir. They'll have to get the key of the gate afore they can take me in, for it's allus locked. And there's a step there, as I used fur to clean with my broom.—It's turned wery dark, sir. Is there any light a comin?"

"It is coming fast, Jo."

Fast. The cart is shaken all to pieces, and the rugged road is very near its end.

"Jo, my poor fellow!"

"I hear you, sir, in the dark, but I'm a gropin—a gropin—let me catch hold of your hand."

"Jo, can you say what I say?"

"I'll say anythink as you say, sir, for I knows it's good."

"OUR FATHER."

"Our Father!—yes, that's wery good, sir."

"WHICH ART IN HEAVEN."

"Art in Heaven—is the light a comin, sir?"

"It is close at hand. HALLOWED BE THY NAME!"

"Hallowed be—thy——"

The light is come upon the dark benighted way. Dead!

Dead, your Majesty. Dead, my lords and gentlemen. Dead, Right Reverends and Wrong Reverends of every order. Dead, men and women, born with Heavenly compassion in your hearts. And dying thus around us every day.

[By kind permission of Messrs Chapman and Hall.]

THE TUGGSES AT RAMSGATE.

(Condensed.)

ONCE upon a time there dwelt, in a narrow street of London, Mr. Joseph Tuggs—a little dark-faced man, with shiny hair, twinkling eyes, short legs, and a body of very considerable thickness. The figure of the amiable Mrs. Tuggs, if not perfectly symmetrical, was decidedly comfortable; and the form of her only daughter, Miss Charlotte Tuggs, was fast ripening into luxuriant plumpness. Mr. Simon Tuggs, his only son, was differently formed in body and in mind from the remainder of his family. There was that elongation in his thoughtful face, and that tendency to weakness in his interesting legs, which tell so forcibly of a great mind and romantic disposition.

Mr. Joseph Tuggs was a grocer. Mr. Tuggs attended to the grocery department; Mrs. Tuggs to the cheesemongery; and Miss Tuggs to her education. Mr. Simon Tuggs kept his father's books, and his own counsel.

One fine spring afternoon a stranger dismounted from a cab, and hastily entered the shop. He bore with him a green umbrella and a blue bag.

"Mr. Tuggs," said the stranger advancing. "I come from the Temple."

"From the Temple!" said Mrs. Tuggs, flinging open the door of the little parlour.

"From the Temple!" said Miss Tuggs and Mr. Simon Tuggs.

"From the Temple!" said Mr. Joseph Tuggs, turning pale.

"From the Temple," repeated the man with the bag; "Mr. Tuggs, I congratulate you, sir. Ladies, I wish you joy of your prosperity! We have been successful."

A long-pending lawsuit respecting the validity of a will had been unexpectedly decided; and Mr. Joseph Tuggs was the possessor of twenty thousand pounds. A prolonged consultation took place that night in the little parlour—a consultation that was to settle the future destinies of the Tuggses.

"We must certainly give up business," said Miss Tuggs.

"Simon shall go to the bar," said Mr. Joseph Tuggs.

"And I shall always sign myself 'Cymon' in future," said his son.

"And I shall call myself Charlotta," said Miss Tuggs.

"And you must call *me* 'Ma,' and father 'Pa,'" said Mrs. Tuggs.

"Yes, and Pa must leave off all his vulgar habits," interposed Miss Tuggs.

"I'll take care of all that," responded Mr. Joseph Tuggs complacently. He was, at that very moment, eating pickled salmon with a pocket-knife.

"We must leave town immediately," said Mr. Cymon Tuggs.

Everybody concurred that this was an indispensable preliminary to being genteel. The question then arose, Where should they go? Ramsgate was just the place of all others.

Two months after this conversation, the City of London Ramsgate steamer was running gaily down the river. The Tuggses were on board.

"Charming, ain't it?" said Mr. Joseph Tuggs.

"Soul-inspiring!" replied Mr. Cymon Tuggs. "Soul-inspiring!"

"Delightful morning, sir!" said a stoutish, military-looking gentleman.

"Heavenly!" replied Mr. Cymon Tuggs.

"You are an enthusiastic admirer of the beauties of Nature, sir?"

"I am, sir."

"Travelled much, sir?"

"Not much."

"You've been on the Continent, of course?"

"Not exactly," replied Mr. Cymon Tuggs—in a qualified tone, as if he wished it to be implied that he had gone half-way, and come back again.

"You of course intend your son to make the grand tour, sir?" said the military gentleman, addressing Mr. Joseph Tuggs.

As Mr. Joseph Tuggs did not precisely understand what the grand tour was, or how such an article was manufactured, he replied, "Of course." Just as he said the word, there came tripping up, from her seat at the stern of the vessel, a young lady in a puce-coloured silk cloak, and boots of the same.

"Walter, my dear," said the young lady to the military gentleman.

"Yes, Belinda, my love."

"What have you left me alone so long for? I have been stared out of countenance by those rude young men."

"What! stared at? Which young men—where?"

"Be calm, Walter, I entreat."

"I won't."

"Do, sir," interposed Mr. Cymon Tuggs. "They ain't worth your notice."

"I *will* be calm. You speak truly, sir. I thank you for a timely remonstrance, which may have spared me the guilt of manslaughter." Calming his wrath, the military gentleman wrung Mr. Cymon Tuggs by the hand.

"Walter, my dear," said the black-eyed young lady, after they had sat chatting with the Tuggses some half-hour, "don't you think this gentleman (with an inclination of the head towards Mr. Cymon Tuggs) is very like the Marquis Carriwini?"

"Dear me, very!" said the military gentleman.

"It struck me the moment I saw him," said the young lady.

All this was highly gratifying to the feelings of the Tuggses; and when, in the course of further conversation, it was discovered that Miss Charlotta Tuggs was the *fac-simile* of a titled relative of Mrs. Belinda Waters (for that was the lady's name), and that Mrs. Tuggs herself was the very picture of the Dowager Duchess of Dobbleton, their delight in the acquisition of so genteel and friendly an acquaintance knew no bounds.

"Good-bye, dear!" said Mrs. Captain Waters to Miss Charlotta Tuggs, just before the bustle of landing commenced; "we shall see you on the sands in the morning; and, as we are sure to have found lodgings before then, I hope we shall be inseparables for many weeks to come."

"Oh! I hope so," said Miss Charlotta Tuggs emphatically.

"Good-bye!" said Mrs. Captain Waters—"good-bye, Mr. Cymon!" and, with a pressure of the hand, Mrs. Captain Waters disappeared among the crowd.

The pier had presented a scene of life and bustle to the Tuggses on their first landing at Ramsgate, but it was far surpassed by the appearance of the sands on the morning after their arrival.

"How d'ye do, dear? We have been looking for you all the morning," said a voice to Miss Charlotta Tuggs. Mrs. Captain Waters was the owner of it.

"How d'ye do?" said Captain Walter Waters. "What do you think of doing with yourself this morning? Shall we lunch at Pegwell?"

"I should like that very much indeed," interposed Mrs. Tuggs. She had never heard of Pegwell; but the word "lunch" had reached her ears, and it sounded very agreeably.

"How shall we go? It's too warm to walk."

"A shay?" suggested Mr. Joseph Tuggs.

"Chaise," whispered Mr. Cymon.

"I should think one would be enough. However, two shays if you like."

"I should like a donkey *so* much," said Belinda.

"Oh, so should I!" echoed Charlotta Tuggs.

"Well, we can have a fly," suggested the captain, "and you can have a couple of donkeys."

A fresh difficulty arose. Mrs. Captain Waters declared it would be decidedly improper for two ladies to ride alone. Perhaps young Mr. Tuggs would accompany them.

Mr. Cymon Tuggs faintly protested that he was no horseman. The objection was at once overruled, and the animals procured.

"Kim up!" shouted one of the two boys who followed behind to propel the donkeys, when Belinda Waters and Charlotta Tuggs were in their saddles.

"Hi—hi—hi!" groaned the other boy behind Mr. Cymon Tuggs. Away went the donkey, with the stirrups jingling against the heels of Cymon's boots, and Cymon's boots nearly scraping the ground.

"Way—way! Wo—o—o—o—!" cried Mr. Cymon Tuggs.

"Don't make it gallop!" screamed Mrs. Captain Waters behind.

"My donkey *will* go into the public-house!" shrieked Miss Tuggs in the rear.

"Hi—hi—hi!" groaned both the boys together; and on went the donkeys as if nothing would ever stop them.

However, even the galloping of donkeys will cease in time. The animal which Mr. Cymon Tuggs bestrode abruptly sidled against a brick wall, and ground Mr. Cymon Tuggs's leg on the rough surface. Mrs. Captain Waters's donkey rushed suddenly, head first, into a hedge, and declined to come out again; and the quadruped on which Miss Tuggs was mounted expressed his delight at this humorous proceeding by firmly planting his fore-feet against

the ground, and kicking up his hind-legs in a very agile, but somewhat alarming manner.

This abrupt termination to the rapidity of the ride naturally occasioned some confusion. The efforts of the boys, however, assisted by the ingenious expedient of twisting the tail of the most rebellious donkey, restored order in a much shorter time than could have reasonably been expected, and the little party jogged slowly on together.

"Now let 'em walk," said Mr. Cymon Tuggs. "It's cruel to over-drive 'em."

"Wery well, sir," replied the boy with a grin.

"What a lovely day, dear," said Charlotta.

"Charming; enchanting, dear!" responded Mrs. Captain Waters. "What a beautiful prospect, Mr. Tuggs!"

Cymon looked full in Belinda's face as he responded—"Beautiful indeed!" The lady cast down her eyes, and suffered the animal she was riding to fall a little back. Cymon Tuggs instinctively did the same.

There was a brief silence, broken only by a sigh from Mr. Cymon Tuggs.

"Mr. Cymon," said the lady, "Mr. Cymon—I am another's. If I had not been——"

"What—what?" said Mr. Cymon earnestly. "Do not torture me. What would you say?"

"If I had not been—if, in earlier life, it had been my fate to have known, and been beloved by, a noble youth—a kindred soul—a congenial spirit—one capable of feeling and appreciating the sentiments which——"

"What do I hear? Is it possible? Can I believe my—— Come up!" (This last unsentimental parenthesis was addressed to the donkey.)

"Hi—hi—hi!" said the boys behind. The donkey started away with a celerity of pace which jerked Mr. Cymon's hat off instantaneously, and carried him to the Pegwell Bay Hotel in no time, where he deposited his rider without giving him the trouble of dismounting.

Considerable was the alarm of Mrs. Tuggs in behalf of her son; agonising were the apprehensions of Mrs. Captain Waters on his account. It was speedily discovered, however, that he had not sustained much more injury than the donkey—he was grazed and

the animal was grazing—and then it *was* a delightful party to be sure!

Thus passed the days of the Tuggses and the Waterses for six weeks.

On that very night six weeks, the moon was shining brightly over the calm sea, when two figures would have been discernible—if anybody had looked for them—seated on one of the wooden benches which are stationed near the verge of the western cliff. Mr. Cymon Tuggs and Mrs. Captain Waters were seated on that bench, gazing on the sea.

“Walter will return to-morrow,” said Mrs. Captain Waters.

Mr. Cymon Tuggs sighed like a gust of wind through a forest of gooseberry-bushes as he replied, “Alas, he will!”

“Oh, Cymon,” resumed Belinda, “the chaste delight, the calm happiness, of this one week of Platonic love, is too much for me! And to think that even this glimpse of happiness, innocent as it is, is now to be lost for ever!”

“Oh, do not say for ever, Belinda!” exclaimed the excitable Cymon as two strongly-defined tears chased each other down his pale face—it was so long that there was plenty of room for a chase. “Do not say for ever!”

“I must.”

“Why? oh, why? Such Platonic acquaintance as ours is so harmless, that even your husband can never object to it.”

“My husband! You little know him. Jealous and revengeful; ferocious in his revenge—a maniac in his jealousy! Would you be assassinated before my eyes?” Mr. Cymon Tuggs, in a voice broken by emotion, expressed his disinclination to undergo the process of assassination before the eyes of anybody.

“Then leave me. Leave me, this night, for ever. It is late; let us return.”

Mr. Cymon Tuggs sadly offered the lady his arm, and escorted her to her lodgings. He paused at the door—he felt a Platonic pressure of his hand. “Good night!” he said, hesitatingly.

“Good night!” sobbed the lady. Mr. Cymon Tuggs paused again.

“Won’t you walk in, sir?” said the servant.

Mr. Tuggs hesitated. Oh, that hesitation! He *did* walk in.

“Good night!” said Mr. Cymon Tuggs again, when he reached the drawing-room.

"Good night!" replied Belinda; "and if, at any period of my life I—— Hush!" The lady paused and stared, with a steady gaze of horror, on the ashy countenance of Mr. Cymon Tuggs. There was a double knock at the street-door.

"It is my husband!" said Belinda, as the Captain's voice was heard below.

"And my family!" added Cymon Tuggs, as the voices of his relatives floated up the staircase.

"The curtain! the curtain!" gasped Mrs. Captain Waters, pointing to the window.

"But I have done nothing wrong," said the hesitating Cymon.

"The curtain!" reiterated the frantic lady; "you will be murdered." This last appeal to his feelings was irresistible. The dismayed Cymon concealed himself behind the curtain with pantomimic suddenness.

Enter the Captain, Joseph Tuggs, Mrs. Tuggs, and Charlotta.

"My dear," said the Captain, "Lieutenant Slaughter. Slaughter, a cigar?"

Now, Mr. Cymon Tuggs never could smoke without feeling it indispensably necessary to retire immediately, and never could smell smoke without a strong disposition to cough. The apartment was small, the door was closed, the smoke powerful; it hung in heavy wreaths over the room, and at length found its way behind the curtain. Cymon Tuggs held his nose, his mouth, his breath. It was all of no use—out came the cough.

"I beg your pardon, Miss Tuggs," said the Captain. "You dislike smoking?"

"Oh no; I don't indeed!"

"It makes you cough."

"Oh dear no!"

"You coughed just now."

"Me, Captain Waters! How can you say so?"

"Somebody coughed," said the Captain.

No; everybody denied it.

Cigars resumed—more smoke—another cough—smothered, but violent.

"Odd!" said the Captain, staring about him.

"Sing'ler!" ejaculated the unconscious Mr. Joseph Tuggs.

Lieutenant Slaughter looked first at one person mysteriously, then at another; then, laid down his cigar; then, approached the

window on tiptoe, and pointed with his right thumb over his shoulder, in the direction of the curtain.

"Slaughter!" ejaculated the Captain, rising from table, "what do you mean?"

The Lieutenant, in reply, drew back the curtain, and discovered Mr. Cymon Tuggs behind it; pallid with apprehension, and blue with wanting to cough.

"Aha!" exclaimed the Captain furiously. "What do I see? Slaughter, your sabre!"

"Cymon!" screamed the Tuggses.

"Mercy!" said Belinda.

"Platonic!" gasped Cymon.

"Your sabre!" roared the Captain. "Slaughter—unhand me—the villain's life!"

"Murder!" screamed the Tuggses.

"Hold him fast, sir!" faintly articulated Cymon.

"Water!" exclaimed Joseph Tuggs—and Mr. Cymon Tuggs and all the ladies forthwith fainted away, and formed a tableau.

When Mr. Cymon Tuggs recovered from the nervous disorder into which misplaced affection and exciting circumstances had plunged him, he found that his family had lost their pleasant acquaintance; that his father was minus fifteen hundred pounds; and the Captain plus the precise sum. Three designing impostors never found more easy dupes than did Captain Waters, Mrs. Waters, and Lieutenant Slaughter, in the Tuggses at Ramsgate.

SHOOTING EXPERIENCES.

THE birds, who, happily for their own peace of mind and personal comfort, were in blissful ignorance of the preparations which had been making to astonish them, on the first of September, hailed it, no doubt, as one of the pleasantest mornings they had seen that season. In plain commonplace matter-of-fact, then, it was a fine morning, when an open carriage, in which were three Pickwickians, Mr. Wardle, and Mr. Trundle, with Sam Weller on the box beside the driver, pulled up by a gate at the road-side, before which stood a tall, raw-boned gamekeeper, and a half-booted, leather-leggined boy: each bearing a bag of capacious dimensions, and accompanied by a brace of pointers.

"I say," whispered Mr. Winkle to Wardle, "they don't suppose we're going to kill game enough to fill those bags, do they?"

"Fill them!" exclaimed old Wardle. "Bless you, yes! You shall fill one, and I the other; and when we've done with them, the pockets of our shooting-jackets will hold as much more."

Mr. Winkle dismounted without saying anything in reply to this observation.

"Hi, Juno, lass—hi, old girl; down, Daph, down," said Wardle, caressing the dogs. "Sir Geoffrey still in Scotland, of course, Martin?"

The tall gamekeeper replied in the affirmative, and looked with some surprise from Mr. Winkle, who was holding his gun as if he wished his coat pocket to save him the trouble of pulling the trigger, to Mr. Tupman, who was holding his as if he were afraid of it—as there is no earthly reason to doubt he really was.

"My friends are not much in the way of this sort of thing yet, Martin," said Wardle, noticing the look. "Live and learn, you know. They'll be good shots one of these days. I beg my friend Winkle's pardon, though; he has had some practice."

Mr. Winkle smiled feebly over his blue neckerchief in acknowledgment of the compliment, and got himself so mysteriously entangled with his gun, in his modest confusion, that if the piece had been loaded, he must inevitably have shot himself dead upon the spot.

"You mustn't handle your piece in that ere way, when you come to have the charge in it, sir," said the tall gamekeeper gruffly, "or you'll make cold meat of some on us."

Mr. Winkle, thus admonished, abruptly altered its position, and, in so doing, contrived to bring the barrel into pretty sharp contact with Mr. Weller's head.

"Hallo!" said Sam. "Hallo, sir! if you comes it this vay, you'll fill one o' them bags, and something to spare, at one fire."

Here the leather-legged boy laughed very heartily, and then tried to look as if it was somebody else, whereat Mr. Winkle frowned majestically.

"Where did you tell the boy to meet us with the snack, Martin?" inquired Wardle.

"Side of One-tree Hill, at twelve o'clock, sir."

"Vey well. Now the sooner we're off the better. Will you join us at twelve, then, Pickwick?"

"Why, I suppose I must."

"An't the gentleman a shot, sir?" inquired the long gamekeeper.

"No," replied Wardle; "and he's lame besides."

"I should very much like to go," said Mr. Pickwick, "very much."

There was a short pause of commiseration.

"There's a barrow t'other side the hedge," said the boy. "If the gentleman's servant would wheel along the paths, he could keep nigh us, and we could lift it over the stiles, and that."

"The very thing," said Mr. Weller, who was a party interested, inasmuch as he ardently longed to see the sport. "The very thing. Well said, Smallcheck; I'll have it out in a minute."

But here a difficulty arose. The long gamekeeper resolutely protested against the introduction, into a shooting party, of a gentleman in a barrow, as a gross violation of all established rules and precedents.

It was a great objection, but not an insurmountable one. The gamekeeper having been coaxed and feed, and having, moreover, eased his mind by "punching" the head of the inventive youth who had first suggested the use of the machine, Mr. Pickwick was placed in it, and off the party set; Wardle and the long gamekeeper leading the way, and Mr. Pickwick in the barrow, propelled by Sam, bringing up the rear.

"Stop, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, when they had got half across the first field.

"What's the matter now?" said Wardle.

"I won't suffer this barrow to be moved another step, unless Winkle carries that gun of his in a different manner."

"How *am* I to carry it?" said the wretched Winkle.

"Carry it with the muzzle to the ground," said Mr. Pickwick.

"It's so unsportsman-like."

"I don't care whether it's unsportsman-like or not, I am not going to be shot in a wheelbarrow, for the sake of appearances, to please anybody."

"I know the gentleman 'll put that ere charge into somebody afore he's done," growled the long man.

"Well, well—I don't mind," said poor Winkle, turning his gun-stock uppermost—"there."

"Anythin' for a quiet life," said Mr. Weller; and on they went again.

"Stop!" said Mr. Pickwick, after they had gone a few yards further.

"What now?" said Wardle.

"That gun of Tupman's is not safe; I know it isn't."

"Eh? What! not safe?" said Mr. Tupman, in a tone of great alarm.

"Not as you are carrying it. I am very sorry to make any further objection, but I cannot consent to go on, unless you carry it as Winkle does his."

"I think you had better, sir," said the long gamekeeper, "or you're quite as likely to lodge the charge in yourself as in anything else."

Mr. Tupman, with the most obliging haste, placed his piece in the position required, and the party moved on again; the two amateurs marching with reversed arms, like a couple of privates at a royal funeral.

The dogs suddenly came to a dead stop, and the party advancing stealthily a single pace, stopped too.

"What's the matter with the dogs' legs?" whispered Mr. Winkle. "How queer they're standing."

"Hush, can't you?" replied Wardle, softly. "Don't you see, they're making a point?"

"Making a point!" said Mr. Winkle, staring about him, as if he expected to discover some particular beauty in the landscape, which the sagacious animals were calling special attention to. "Making a point! What are they pointing at?"

"Keep your eyes open," said Wardle. "Now then."

There was a sharp whirring noise, that made Mr. Winkle start back as if he had been shot himself. Bang, bang, went a couple of guns—the smoke swept quickly away over the field, and curled into the air.

"Where are they?" said Mr. Winkle. "Tell me when to fire. Where are they—where are they?"

"Where are they?" said Wardle, taking up a brace of birds which the dogs had deposited at his feet. "Why, here they are."

"No, no; I mean the others," said the bewildered Winkle.

"Far enough off, by this time," replied Wardle, coolly reloading his gun.

"We shall very likely be up with another covey in five minutes," said the long gamekeeper. "If the gentleman begins to fire now, perhaps he'll just get the shot out of the barrel by the time they rise."

"Ha! ha! ha!" roared Mr. Weller.

"Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, compassionating his follower's confusion and embarrassment.

"Sir."

"Don't laugh."

"Certainly not, sir." So, by way of indemnification, Mr. Weller contorted his features from behind the wheelbarrow, for the exclusive amusement of the boy with the leggings, who thereupon burst into a boisterous laugh, and was summarily cuffed by the long gamekeeper, who wanted a pretext for turning round, to hide his own merriment.

"Bravo, old fellow!" said Wardle to Mr. Tupman; "you fired that time, at all events."

"Oh, yes," replied Mr. Tupman, with conscious pride. "I let it off."

"Well done. You'll hit something next time, if you look sharp. Very easy, ain't it?"

"Yes, it's very easy," said Mr. Tupman. "How it hurts one's shoulder, though. It nearly knocked me backwards. I had no idea these small fire-arms kicked so."

"Ah," said the old gentleman, smiling; "you'll get used to it in time. Now then—all ready—all right with the barrow there?"

"All right, sir," replied Mr. Weller.

"Come along, then."

"Hold hard, sir," said Sam, raising the barrow.

"Aye, aye," replied Mr. Pickwick; and on they went, as briskly as need be.

"Keep that barrow back now," cried Wardle, when it had been hoisted over a stile into another field, and Mr. Pickwick had been deposited in it once more.

"All right, sir," replied Mr. Weller, pausing.

"Now, Winkle," said the old gentleman, "follow me softly, and don't be too late this time."

"Never fear," said Mr. Winkle. "Are they pointing?"

"No, no; not now. Quietly now, quietly." On they crept, and very quietly they would have advanced, if Mr. Winkle, in the

performance of some very intricate evolutions with his gun, had not accidentally fired, at the most critical moment, over the boy's head, exactly in the very spot where the tall man's brain would have been, had he been there instead.

"Why, what on earth did you do that for?" said old Wardle, as the birds flew unharmed away.

"I never saw such a gun in my life," replied poor Mr. Winkle, looking at the lock, as if that would do any good. "It goes off of its own accord. It *will* do it."

"Will do it!" echoed Wardle, with something of irritation in his manner. "I wish it would kill something of its own accord."

"It'll do that afore long, sir," observed the tall man, in a low, prophetic voice.

"What do you mean by that observation, sir?" inquired Mr. Winkle, angrily.

"Never mind, sir, never mind," replied the long gamekeeper; "I've no family myself, sir; and this here boy's mother will get something handsome from Sir Geoffrey, if he's killed on his land. Load again, sir, load again."

"Take away his gun," cried Mr. Pickwick from the barrow, horror-stricken at the long man's dark insinuations. "Take away his gun, do you hear, somebody?"

Nobody, however, volunteered to obey the command; and Mr. Winkle, after darting a rebellious glance at Mr. Pickwick, reloaded his gun and proceeded onwards with the rest.

We are bound, on the authority of Mr. Pickwick, to state, that Mr. Tupman's mode of proceeding evinced far more of prudence and deliberation than that adopted by Mr. Winkle. Still, this by no means detracts from the great authority of the latter gentleman, on all matters connected with the field; because, as Mr. Pickwick beautifully observes, it has somehow or other happened, from time immemorial, that many of the best and ablest philosophers, who have been perfect lights of science in matters of theory, have been wholly unable to reduce them to practice.

Mr. Tupman's process, like many of our most sublime discoveries, was extremely simple. With the quickness and penetration of a man of genius, he had at once observed that the two great points to be attained were—first, to discharge his piece without injury to himself, and, secondly, to do so without danger to the bystanders;—obviously, the best thing to do, after surmounting

the difficulty of firing at all, was to shut his eyes firmly, and fire into the air.

On one occasion, after performing this feat, Mr. Tupman, on opening his eyes, beheld a plump partridge in the act of falling wounded to the ground. He was on the point of congratulating Mr. Wardle on his invariable success, when that gentleman advanced towards him, and grasped him warmly by the hand.

"Tupman," said the old gentleman, "you singled out that particular bird?"

"No," said Mr. Tupman—"no."

"You did," said Wardle. "I saw you do it—I observed you pick him out—I noticed you, as you raised your piece to take aim; and I will say this, that the best shot in existence could not have done it more beautifully. You are an older hand at this than I thought you, Tupman; you have been out before."

It was in vain for Mr. Tupman to protest, with a smile of self-denial, that he never had. The very smile was taken as evidence to the contrary; and from that time forth, his reputation was established. It is not the only reputation that has been acquired as easily, nor are such fortunate circumstances confined to partridge-shooting.

Meanwhile, Mr. Winkle flashed, and blazed, and smoked away, without producing any material results worthy of being noted down; sometimes expending his charge in mid-air, and at others sending it skimming along so near the surface of the ground as to place the lives of the two dogs on a rather uncertain and precarious tenure. As a display of fancy shooting, it was extremely varied and curious; as an exhibition of firing with any precise object, it was, upon the whole, perhaps a failure.

SKATING EXPERIENCES.

"Now," said Wardle, "what say you to an hour on the ice? We shall have plenty of time."

"Capital!" said Mr. Benjamin Allen.

"Prime!" ejaculated Mr. Bob Sawyer.

"You skate, of course, Winkle?" said Wardle.

"Ye-yes; oh, yes," replied Mr. Winkle. "I—I—am *rather* out of practice."

"Oh, *do* skate, Mr. Winkle," said Arabella. "I like to see it so much."

"Oh, it is *so* graceful," said another young lady.

A third young lady said it was elegant, and a fourth expressed her opinion that it was "swan-like."

"I should be very happy, I'm sure," said Mr. Winkle, reddening; "but I have no skates."

This objection was at once overruled. Trundle had a couple of pairs, and the fat boy announced that there were half-a-dozen more down stairs; whereat Mr. Winkle expressed exquisite delight, and looked exquisitely uncomfortable.

Old Wardle led the way to a pretty large sheet of ice; Mr. Bob Sawyer adjusted his skates with a dexterity which to Mr. Winkle was perfectly marvellous, and described circles with his left leg, and cut figures of eight, and inscribed upon the ice, without once stopping for breath, a great many other pleasant and astonishing devices, to the excessive satisfaction of Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Tupman, and the ladies; which reached a pitch of positive enthusiasm when old Wardle and Benjamin Allen, assisted by the aforesaid Bob Sawyer, performed some mystic evolutions, which they called a reel.

All this time, Mr. Winkle, with his face and hands blue with the cold, had been forcing a gimlet into the soles of his feet, and putting his skates on, with the points behind, and getting the straps into a very complicated and entangled state, with the assistance of Mr. Snodgrass, who knew rather less about skates than a Hindoo. At length, however, with the assistance of Mr. Weller, the unfortunate skates were firmly screwed and buckled on, and Mr. Winkle was raised to his feet.

"Now, then, sir," said Sam, in an encouraging tone; "off with you, and show 'em how to do it."

"Stop, Sam, stop!" said Mr. Winkle, trembling violently, and clutching hold of Sam's arms with the grasp of a drowning man. "How slippery it is, Sam!"

"Not an uncommon thing upon ice, sir," replied Mr. Weller. "Hold up, sir!"

This last observation of Mr. Weller's bore reference to a demonstration Mr. Winkle made at the instant, of a frantic desire to throw his feet in the air, and dash the back of his head on the ice.

"These—these—are very awkward skates; ain't they, Sam?" inquired Mr. Winkle, staggering.

"I'm afeerd there's a orkard gen'lm'n in 'em, sir."

"Now, Winkle," cried Mr. Pickwick, quite unconscious that there was anything the matter. "Come; the ladies are all anxiety."

"Yes, yes," replied Mr. Winkle, with a ghastly smile. "I'm coming."

"Just a goin' to begin," said Sam, endeavouring to disengage himself. "Now, sir, start off!"

"Stop an instant, Sam," gasped Mr. Winkle, clinging most affectionately to Mr. Weller. "I find I've got a couple of coats at home that I don't want, Sam. You may have them, Sam."

"Thank'ee, sir."

"Never mind touching your hat, Sam. You needn't take your hand away to do that. I meant to have given you five shillings this morning for a Christmas-box, Sam. I'll give it you this afternoon, Sam."

"You're very good, sir."

"Just hold me at first, Sam; will you? There—that's right. I shall soon get in the way of it, Sam. Not too fast, Sam; not too fast."

Mr. Winkle stooping forward, with his body half doubled up, was being assisted over the ice by Mr. Weller, in a very singular and un-swan-like manner, when Mr. Pickwick most innocently shouted from the opposite bank:

"Sam!"

"Sir?"

"Here. I want you."

"Let go, sir," said Sam. "Don't you hear Mr. Pickwick calling? Let go, sir."

With a violent effort, Mr. Weller disengaged himself from the grasp of the agonised Pickwickian, and, in so doing, administered a considerable impetus to the unhappy Mr. Winkle. With an accuracy which no degree of dexterity or practice could have insured, that unfortunate gentleman bore swiftly down into the centre of the reel, at the very moment when Mr. Bob Sawyer was performing a flourish of unparalleled beauty. Mr. Winkle struck wildly against him, and with a loud crash they both fell heavily down. Mr. Pickwick ran to the spot. Bob Sawyer had risen to his feet, but Mr. Winkle was far too wise to do anything of the kind, in skates. He was seated on the ice, making spasmodic

efforts to smile; but anguish was depicted on every lineament of his countenance.

Mr. Pickwick beckoned to Mr. Weller, and said in a stern voice, "Take his skates off."

"No; but really I had scarcely begun," remonstrated Mr. Winkle.

"Take his skates off," repeated Mr. Pickwick firmly.

The command was not to be resisted. Mr. Winkle allowed Sam to obey it in silence.

"Lift him up," said Mr. Pickwick. Sam assisted him to rise.

Mr. Pickwick retired a few paces apart from the bystanders; and, beckoning his friend to approach, fixed a searching look upon him, and uttered in a low, but distinct and emphatic tone, these remarkable words:—

"You're an impostor, sir."

"A what?" said Mr. Winkle, starting.

"I will speak plainer, if you wish it. An impostor, sir."

With those words, Mr. Pickwick turned slowly on his heel, and rejoined his friends.

"Sliding looks a nice warm exercise, doesn't it?" he inquired of Wardle, when that gentleman was thoroughly out of breath, by reason of the indefatigable manner in which he had converted his legs into a pair of compasses, and drawn complicated problems on the ice.

"Ah, it does, indeed," replied Wardle. "Do you slide?"

"I used to do so, on the gutters, when I was a boy," replied Mr. Pickwick.

"Try it now," said Wardle.

"Oh do, please, Mr. Pickwick!" cried all the ladies.

"I should be very happy to afford you any amusement," replied Mr. Pickwick, "but I haven't done such a thing these thirty years."

"Pooh! pooh! Nonsense!" said Wardle, dragging off his skates with the impetuosity which characterised all his proceedings. "Here; I'll keep you company; come along!" And away went the good tempered old fellow down the slide, with a rapidity which came very close upon Mr. Weller, and beat the fat boy all to nothing.

Mr. Pickwick paused, considered, pulled off his gloves, and put them in his hat; took two or three short runs, baulked himself as often, and at last took another run, and went slowly and gravely

down the slide, with his feet about a yard and a quarter apart, amidst the gratified shouts of all the spectators.

The sport was at its height, the sliding was at the quickest, the laughter was at the loudest, when a sharp smart crack was heard. There was a quick rush towards the bank, a wild scream from the ladies, and a shout from Mr. Tupman. A large mass of ice disappeared; the water bubbled up over it; Mr. Pickwick's hat, gloves, and handkerchief were floating on the surface; and this was all of Mr. Pickwick that anybody could see.

Dismay and anguish were depicted on every countenance; the males turned pale, and the females fainted. Mr. Snodgrass and Mr. Winkle grasped each other by the hand, and gazed at the spot where their leader had gone down, with frenzied eagerness; while Mr. Tupman, by way of rendering the promptest assistance, and at the same time conveying to any persons who might be within hearing the clearest possible notion of the catastrophe, ran off across the country at his utmost speed, screaming "Fire!" with all his might.

It was at this moment that a face, head, and shoulders emerged from beneath the water, and disclosed the features and spectacles of Mr. Pickwick.

"Keep yourself up for an instant—for only one instant!" bawled Mr. Snodgrass.

"Yes, do; let me implore you—for my sake!" roared Mr. Winkle, deeply affected. The abjuration was rather unnecessary; the probability being, that if Mr. Pickwick had declined to keep himself up for anybody else's sake, it would have occurred to him that he might as well do so for his own.

"Do you feel the bottom there, old fellow?" said Wardle.

"Yes, certainly," replied Mr. Pickwick, wringing the water from his head and face, and gasping for breath. "I fell upon my back. I couldn't get on my feet at first."

The clay upon so much of Mr. Pickwick's coat as was yet visible bore testimony to the accuracy of this statement; and as the fears of the spectators were still further relieved by the fat boy's suddenly recollecting that the water was nowhere more than five feet deep, prodigies of valour were performed to get him out. After a vast quantity of splashing, and cracking, and struggling, Mr. Pickwick was at length fairly extricated from his unpleasant position, and once more stood on dry land.

"Oh, he'll catch his death of cold," said Emily.

"Dear old thing!" said Arabella. "Let me wrap this shawl round you, Mr. Pickwick."

"Ah, that's the best thing you can do," said Wardle; "and when you've got it on, run home as fast as your legs can carry you, and jump into bed directly."

A dozen shawls were offered on the instant. Three or four of the thickest having been selected, Mr. Pickwick was wrapped up, and started off, under the guidance of Mr. Weller; presenting the singular phenomenon of an elderly gentleman, dripping wet, and without a hat, with his arms bound down to his sides, skimming over the ground, without any clearly defined purpose, at the rate of six good English miles an hour, pausing not an instant until he was snug in bed.

LITTLE EM'LY

IN THREE PARTS.

(Condensed and Adapted.)

PART I.

A BLACK barge, or some other kind of superannuated boat, with an iron funnel sticking out of it for a chimney. Such was the house of Mr. Peggotty, as honest a seafaring man as ever breathed. I loved it in my childhood's days. Its inmates consisted of Mr. Peggotty himself; Ham, his orphan nephew; little Em'ly, his adopted niece—my little sweetheart of former years; and Mrs. Gummidge, the widow of Mr. Peggotty's partner in a boat. Towards this old boat on Yarmouth Sands, I and my former schoolfellow, and then loved friend Steerforth, walked on a dark wintry night.

"This is a wild kind of place, Steerforth, is it not?"

"Dismal enough in the dark," he said; "and the sea roars as if it were hungry for us. Is that the boat, where I see a light yonder?"

"That's the boat," said I.

We said no more as we approached the light, but made softly for the door. I laid my hand upon the latch; and whispering Steerforth to keep close to me, went in.

I was in the midst of the astonished family, face to face with Mr. Peggotty, and holding out my hand to him, when Ham shouted :

“Mas'r Davy! It's Mas'r Davy!”

In a moment we were all shaking hands with one another, and asking one another how we did, and telling one another how glad we were to meet, and all talking at once.

“Why that you two gent'lmen—gent'lmen growed—should come to this here roof to-night, of all nights in my life,” said Mr. Peggotty, “is such a thing as never happened afore, I do rightly believe! Em'ly, my darling, come here! Come here, my little witch! There's Mas'r Davy's friend, my dear! There's the gent'lman as you 've heerd on, Em'ly. He comes to see you, along with Mas'r Davy, on the brightest night of your uncle's life as ever was or will be—horroar for it!”

After delivering this speech all in a breath, and with extraordinary animation and pleasure, Mr. Peggotty put one of his large hands rapturously on each side of his niece's face and kissed it a dozen times. Then he let her go; and as she ran into the little chamber where I used to sleep, looked round upon us, quite hot and out of breath with his uncommon satisfaction.

“If you two gent'lmen—gent'lmen growed now, and such gent'lmen—” said Mr. Peggotty, “don't ex-cuse me for being in a state of mind, when you understand matters, I'll arks your pardon. Em'ly, my dear!—She knows I'm a going to tell, and has made off. Would you be so good as look arter her, Mawther, for a minute?”

Mrs. Gummidge nodded and disappeared.

“If this ain't,” said Mr. Peggotty, sitting down amongst us by the fire, “the brightest night o' my life, I'm a shellfish—biled too—and more I can't say. This here little Em'ly, sir,” in a low voice to Steerforth, “—her as you see a blushing here just now—This here little Em'ly of ours, has been, in our house, what I suppose (I'm a ignorant man, but that's my belief) no one but a little bright-eyed creetur *can* be in a house. She ain't my child; I never had one; but I couldn't love her more. You understand! I couldn't do it!”

“I quite understand,” said Steerforth.

“I know you do, sir,” returned Mr. Peggotty, “and thankee again. Mas'r Davy, he can remember what she was; you may

judge for your own self what she is; but neither of you can't fully know what she has been, is, and will be, to my loving art. I am rough, sir," said Mr. Peggotty, "I am as rough as a Sea Porkypine; but no one, unless, mayhap, it is a woman, can know, I think, what our little Em'ly is to me."

"There was a certain person as had know'd our Em'ly, from the time when her father was drowned; as had seen her constant; when a babby, when a young gal, when a woman. Not much of a person to look at, he warn't," said Mr. Peggotty, "something o' my own build—rough—a good deal o' the sou'wester in him—very salt—but, on the whole, an honest sort of a chap, with his art in the right place."

I thought I had never seen Ham grin to anything like the extent to which he sat grinning at us now.

"What does this here blessed tarpaulin go and do," said Mr. Peggotty, "but he loses that there art of his to our little Em'ly. He follers her about, he makes hisself a sort o' servant to her, he loses in a great measure his relish for his wittles, and in the long run he makes it clear to me wot's amiss. Now I could wish myself, you see, that our little Em'ly was in a fair way of being married. I don't know how long I may live; but I know that if I was capsized, any night, in a gale of wind, I could go down quieter for thinking 'There's a man ashore there, iron-true to my little Em'ly, God bless her, and no wrong can touch my Em'ly while so be as that man lives!'"

"Well! I counsels him to speak to Em'ly. He's big enough, but he's bashfuller than a little un, and he don't like. So *I* speak. 'What! *Him!*' says Em'ly. '*Him* that I've know'd so intimate so many years, and like so much! Oh, Uncle! I never can have *him*. He's such a good fellow!' I gives her a kiss, and I says no more to her than 'My dear, you're right to speak out, you're to choose for yourself, you're as free as a little bird.' Then I aways to him, and I says, 'I wish it could have been so, but it can't. But you can both be as you was, and wot I say to you is, Be as you was with her, like a man.' He says to me, a shaking of my hand, 'I will!' he says. And he was—honourable and manful—for two years going on, and we was just the same at home here as afore."

"All of a sudden, one evening—as it might be to-night—comes little Em'ly from her work, and him with her! There ain't so

much in *that*, you'll say. No, because he takes care on her, like a brother, arter dark, and indeed afore dark, and at all times. But this tarpaulin chap, he takes hold of her hand, and he cries out to me, joyful, 'Look here! This is to be my little wife!' And she says, half bold and half shy, and half a laughing and half a crying, 'Yes, uncle! If you please.'—'If I please! as if I should do anything else!—'If you please, I am steadier now, and I have thought better of it, and I'll be as good a little wife as I can to him, for he's a dear good fellow!' Then Missis Gummidge, she claps her hands like a play, and you come in. There! the murder's out!" said Mr. Peggotty—"You come in! It took place this here present hour; and here's the man that 'll marry her, the minute she's out of her time."

Ham staggered, as well he might, under the blow Mr. Peggotty dealt him in his unbounded joy, as a mark of confidence and friendship; but feeling called upon to say something to us, he said, with much faltering and great difficulty:

"She warn't no higher than you was, Mas'r Davy—when you first come—when I thought what she'd grow up to be. I see her grow up—gent'lmen—like a flower. I'd lay down my life for her—Mas'r Davy—Oh! most content and cheerful! She's more to me—gent'lmen—than—she's all to me that ever I can want, and more than ever I—than ever I could say. I—I love her true. There ain't a gent'lman in all the land—nor yet sailing upon all the sea—that can love his lady more than I love her, though there's many a common man—would say better—what he meant."

I thought it affecting to see such a sturdy fellow as Ham was now, trembling in the strength of what he felt for the pretty little creature who had won his heart. I thought the simple confidence reposed in us by Mr. Peggotty and by himself, was, in itself, affecting. I was affected by the story altogether. I know that I was filled with pleasure by all this; but, at first, with an indescribably sensitive pleasure, that a very little would have changed to pain.

Therefore, if it had depended upon me to touch the prevailing chord among them with any skill, I should have made a poor hand of it. But it depended upon Steerforth; and he did it with such address, that in a few minutes we were all as easy and as happy as it was possible to be.

"Mr. Peggotty," he said, "you are a thoroughly good fellow,

and deserve to be as happy as you are to-night. My hand upon it! Ham, I give you joy, my boy. My hand upon that, too! Daisy, stir the fire, and make it a brisk one! and Mr. Peggotty, unless you can induce your gentle niece to come back (for whom I vacate this seat in the corner), I shall go. Any gap at your fireside on such a night—such a gap least of all—I wouldn't make, for the wealth of the Indies!"

So Mr. Peggotty went into my old room to fetch little Em'ly. At first little Em'ly didn't like to come, and then Ham went. Presently they brought her to the fireside, very much confused, and very shy—but she soon became more assured when she found how gently and respectfully Steerforth spoke to her. Lightly and easily he carried on, until he brought us, by degrees, into a charmed circle, and we were all talking away without any reserve.

Em'ly sat all the evening on the old locker in her old little corner by the fire—Ham beside her, where I used to sit. I could not satisfy myself whether it was in her own little tormenting way, or in a maidenly reserve before us, that she kept quite close to the wall, and away from him; but I observed that she did so all the evening.

As I remember, it was almost midnight when we took our leave. We parted merrily; and as they all stood crowded round the door to light us as far as they could upon our road, I saw the sweet blue eyes of little Em'ly peeping after us, from behind Ham, and heard her soft voice calling to us to be careful how we went.

"A most engaging little Beauty!" said Steerforth, taking my arm. "Well! It's a quaint place, and they are quaint company; and it's quite a new sensation to mix with them."

"How fortunate we are, too," I returned, "to have arrived to witness their happiness in that intended marriage! I never saw people so happy. How delightful to see it, and to be made the sharers in their honest joy, as we have been!"

"That's rather a chuckle-headed fellow for the girl; isn't he?" said Steerforth.

He had been so hearty with him, and with them all, that I felt a shock in this unexpected and cold reply. But turning quickly upon him, and seeing a laugh in his eyes, I answered, much relieved:

"Ah, Steerforth! It's well for you to joke about the poor! But when I see how perfectly you understand them, how exquisitely you can enter into happiness like this plain fisherman's, I know

that there is not a joy or sorrow, not an emotion, of such people, that can be indifferent to you. And I admire and love you for it, Steerforth, twenty times the more!"

He stopped, and looking in my face, said, "Daisy, I believe you are in earnest, and are good. I wish we all were!" Next moment he was gaily singing as we walked at a round pace back to Yarmouth.

PART II.

A few months afterwards, I again had occasion to be in Yarmouth, and again found myself on the way to the old boat by night. Little Em'ly was very shortly to be married to Ham, and I was by invitation to see her on that evening, probably for the last time previous to the event.

I was soon within sight of Mr. Peggotty's house, and of the light within it shining through the window. A little floundering across the sand, which was heavy, brought me to the door, and I went in.

It looked very comfortable, indeed. Mr. Peggotty had smoked his evening pipe, and there were preparations for some supper by-and-by. The fire was bright, the ashes were thrown up, the locker was ready for little Em'ly in her old place.

"You're first of the lot, Mas'r Davy!" said Mr. Peggotty, with a happy face. "Sit ye down, sir. It ain't o' no use saying welcome to you, but you're welcome, kind and hearty."

Mrs. Gummidge groaned.

"Cheer up, my pretty mawther!" said Mr. Peggotty. "Doe'n't be down! Cheer up, for your own self, on'y a little bit, and see if a good deal more doe'n't come nat'ral."

"Not to me, Dan'l," returned Mrs. Gummidge. "Nothink's nat'ral to me but to be lone and lorn."

After looking at Mrs. Gummidge for some moments, in sore distress of mind, he glanced at the Dutch clock, rose, snuffed the candle, and put it in the window.

"Theer!" said Mr. Peggotty, cheerily. "Theer we are, Misses Gummidge! Lighted up, accordin' to custom! You're a wonderin' what that's fur, sir! Well, it's fur our little Em'ly. You see, the path ain't over light or cheerful arter dark; and when I'm here at the hour as she's a comin' home, I puts the light in the winder.

That, you see," said Mr. Peggotty, bending over me with great glee, "meets two objects. She says, says Em'ly, 'Theer's home!' she says. And likewise, says Em'ly, 'My uncle's theer!' Fur if I ain't theer, I never have no light showed. I doesn't know but I'm a babby. Not you see, to look at. Not to look at, but to—to consider on, you know. I doesn't care, bless you! Now I tell you. When I go a looking and looking about that theer pritty house of our Em'ly's, if I doesn't feel as if the littlest things was her, a'most. I takes 'em up and I puts 'em down, and I touches of 'em as delicate as if they was our Em'ly. So 'tis with her little bonnets and that. I couldn't see one on 'em rough used a purpose—not fur the whole wureld. There's a babby for you, in the form of a great Sea Porkypine!" said Mr. Peggotty, relieving his earnestness with a roar of laughter. "It's my opinion, you see," said Mr. Peggotty, "as this is along of my havin' played with her so much, and made believe as we was Turks, and French, and sharks, and every wariety of forinners—bless you, yes; and lions and whales, and I doesn't know what all!—when she warn't no higher than my knee. I've got into the way on it, you know. Why, this here candle, now! I know wery well that arter she's married and gone, I shall put that candle theer, just that same as now. I shall sit afore the fire, pretending I'm expecting of her, like I'm a doing now. *There's* a babby for you," said Mr. Peggotty, with another roar, "in the form of a Sea Porkypine! Why, at the present minute, when I see the candle sparkle up, I says to myself, 'She's a looking at it! Em'ly's a coming!' *There's* a babby for you, in the form of a Sea Porkypine! Right for all that," said Mr. Peggotty, stopping in his roar, and smiting his hands together; "fur here she is!"

It was only Ham. The night should have turned more wet since I came in, for he had a large sou'wester hat on, slouched over his face.

"Where's Em'ly?" said Mr. Peggotty.

Ham made a motion with his head, as if she were outside. Mr. Peggotty took the light from the window, trimmed it, put it on the table, and was busily stirring the fire, when Ham, who had not moved, said:

"Mas'r Davy, will you come out a minute, and see what Em'ly and me has got to show you?"

We went out. As I passed him at the door, I saw, to my

astonishment and fright, that he was deadly pale. He pushed me hastily into the open air, and closed the door upon us. Only upon us two.

"Ham! what's the matter?"

"Mas'r Davy!"—Oh, for his broken heart, how dreadfully he wept!

"Ham! Poor good fellow! Tell me what's the matter!"

"My love, Mas'r Davy—the pride and hope of my art—her that I'd have died for, and would die for now—she's gone!"

"Gone?"

"Em'ly's run away! Oh, Mas'r Davy, think *how* she's run away, when I pray my good and gracious God to kill her (her that is so dear above all things) sooner than let her come to ruin and disgrace!"

"You're a scholar," he said, hurriedly, "and know what's right and best. What am I to say indoors? How am I ever to break it to him, Mas'r Davy?"

I saw the door move, and instinctively tried to hold the latch on the outside, to gain a moment's time. It was too late. Mr. Peggotty thrust forth his face; and never could I forget the change that came upon it when he saw us, if I were to live five hundred years.

I remember a great wail and cry, and we all standing in the room; I with a paper in my hand, which Ham had given me; Mr. Peggotty with his vest torn open, his hair wild, his face and lips quite white, and blood trickling down his bosom (it had sprung from his mouth, I think), looking fixedly at me.

"Read it, sir," he said, in a low shivering voice. "Slow, please. I don't know as I can understand."

In the midst of the silence of death, I read thus from a blotted letter:—

'When you, who love me so much better than I ever have deserved, even when my mind was innocent, see this, I shall be far away.'

"I shall be fur away," he repeated slowly. "Stop! Em'ly fur away. Well!"

'When I leave my dear home—my dear home—oh, my dear home! in the morning,' the letter bore date on the previous night:

—it will be never to come back, unless he brings me back a lady. This will be found at night, many hours after, instead of me. Oh, if you knew how my heart is torn. If even you, that I have wronged so much, that never can forgive me, could

only know what I suffer! I am too wicked to write about myself. Oh, take comfort, in thinking that I am so bad. Oh, for mercy's sake, tell uncle that I never loved him half so dear as now. Oh don't remember how affectionate and kind you have all been to me—don't remember we were ever to be married—but try to think as if I died when I was little, and was buried somewhere. Pray Heaven that I am going away from, have compassion on my uncle! Tell him that I never loved him half so dear. Be his comfort. Love some good girl, that will be what I was once to uncle, and be true to you, and worthy of you, and know no shame but me. God bless all! I'll pray for all often, on my knees. If he don't bring me back a lady, and I don't pray for my own self, I'll pray for all. My parting love to my uncle. My last tears, and my last thanks, for uncle!

That was all.

He stood long after I had ceased to read, still looking at me.

Slowly, at last he moved his eyes from my face, as if he were waking from a vision, and cast them round the room. Then he said, in a low voice:

"Who's the man? I want to know his name."

Ham glanced at me, and suddenly I felt a shock that struck me back.

"Mas'r Davy!" implored Ham. "Go out a bit, and let me tell him what I must. You doesn't ought to hear it, sir."

"I want to know his name!" I heard said once more.

"Mas'r Davy," exclaimed Ham, in a broken voice, "it ain't no fault of yourn—and I am far from laying of it to you—but his name is Steerforth!"

Mr. Peggotty uttered no cry, and shed no tear, and moved no more, until he seemed to wake again, all at once, and pulled down his rough coat from its peg in the corner.

"Bear a hand with this! I'm struck of a heap, and can't do it," he said, impatiently. "Bear a hand and help me. Well!" when somebody had done so. "Now give me that theer hat!"

Ham asked him whither he was going.

"I'm a going to seek my niece. I'm a going to seek my Em'ly. I'm a going, first, to stave in that theer boat, and sink it where I would have drowned *him*, as I'm a livin' soul, if I had had one thought of what was in him! As he sat afore me," he said, wildly, holding out his clenched right hand, "as he sat afore me, face to face, strike me down dead, but I'd have drowned him, and thought it right!—I'm a going to seek my niece."

"Where?" cried Ham, interposing himself before the door.

"Anywhere! I'm a going to seek my niece through the wureld. I'm a going to find my poor niece in her shame, and

bring her back. No one stop me! I tell you I'm a going to seek my niece."

"No, no," cried Mrs. Gummidge, coming between them, in a fit of crying. "No, no, Dan'l, not as you are now. Seek her in a little while, my lone lorn Dan'l, and that'll be but right! but not as you are now. Sit ye down, and give me your forgiveness for having ever been a worrit to you, Dan'l—what have *my* contrairies ever been to this?—and let us speak a word about them times when she was first an orphan, and when Ham was too, and when I was a poor widder woman, and you took me in. It'll soften your poor heart, Dan'l," laying her head upon his shoulder, "and you'll bear your sorrow better; for you know the promise, Dan'l, 'As you have done it unto one of the least of these, you have done it unto Me;' and that can never fail under this roof, that's been our shelter for so many, many year!"

He was quite passive now; and when I heard him crying, the impulse that had been upon me to go down upon my knees, and ask their pardon for the desolation I had caused, and curse Steerforth, yielded to a better feeling. My overcharged heart found the same relief, and I cried too.

PART III.

For many a weary day Mr. Peggotty was always wandering about from place to place, with his one object of recovering his niece before him; but was more in London than elsewhere. At last she was found.

"Mas'r Davy," said he, "I thank my Heav'nly Father for having guided of me in His own ways, to my darling."

"You have quite made up your mind as to the future, good friend?"

"Quite, Mas'r Davy," he returned, "and told Em'ly. Theer's mighty countries fur from heer. Our future life lays over the sea. We will begin a new life over theer!"

Some time afterwards, I determined to go down to Yarmouth to see poor Ham, and to deliver into his own hands a letter from Em'ly.

I took the box-seat on the mail. In the evening I started, by that conveyance.

"Don't you think that," I asked the coachman, in the first stage

out of London, "a very remarkable sky? I don't remember to have seen one like it."

"Nor I—not equal to it," he replied. "That's wind, sir. There'll be mischief done at sea, I expect, before long."

It was a murky confusion of flying clouds tossed up into most remarkable heaps, dread disturbance of the laws of nature. There had been a wind all day; and it was rising then, with an extraordinary great sound.

As the night advanced, the clouds closing in and densely overspreading the whole sky, then very dark, it came on to blow, harder and harder. It still increased, until our horses could scarcely face the wind.

When the day broke, it blew harder and harder. I had been in Yarmouth when the seamen said it blew great guns, but I had never known the like of this, or anything approaching to it.

As we struggled on, nearer and nearer to the sea, from which this mighty wind was blowing dead on shore, its force became more and more terrific. Long before we saw the sea, its spray was on our lips, and showered salt rain upon us. When we came within sight of the sea, the waves on the horizon, caught at intervals above the rolling abyss, were like glimpses of another shore with towers and buildings. When at last we got into the town, the people came out to their doors, all aslant, and with streaming hair, making a wonder of the mail that had come through such a night.

I put up at the old inn, and went down to look at the sea. As the high watery walls came rolling in, and, at their highest, tumbled into surf, they looked as if the least would engulf the town. The ideal shore on the horizon, with its towers and buildings, rose and fell; the clouds flew fast and thick; I seemed to see a rending and upheaving of all nature.

Not finding Ham among the people whom this memorable wind—for it is still remembered down there, as the greatest ever known to blow upon that coast—had brought together, I made my way to his house. I learned that he had gone to meet some sudden exigency of ship-repairing in which his skill was required; but that he would be back to-morrow morning, in good time.

I went back to the inn; tried to sleep, but in vain; it was five o'clock in the afternoon. I had not sat five minutes by the coffee-room fire, when the waiter coming to stir it, as an excuse for talking, told me that two colliers had gone down, with all hands, a

few miles away; and that some other ships had been seen labouring hard in the Roads, and trying, in great distress, to keep off shore. Mercy on them, and on all poor sailors, said he, if we had another night like the last!

I could not eat, I could not sit still, I could not continue steadfast to anything.

The steady ticking of the undisturbed clock on the wall tormented me to that degree that I resolved to go to bed.

For hours I lay there, listening to the wind and water.

My restlessness attained to such a pitch, that I hurried on my clothes, and went down stairs.

There was a dark gloom in my solitary chamber, when I at length returned to it; but I was tired now, and, getting into bed again, fell into the depths of sleep. It was broad day—eight or nine o'clock—when I was aroused by some one knocking and calling at my door.

“What is the matter?” I cried.

“A wreck! Close by!”

I sprung out of bed, and asked what wreck?

“A Schooner from Spain or Portugal, laden with fruit and wine. Make haste, sir, if you want to see her! It's thought, down on the beach, she'll go to pieces every moment.”

I wrapped myself in my clothes as quickly as I could, and ran into the street.

Numbers of people were there before me, all running in one direction—to the beach. I ran the same way, outstripping a good many, and soon came facing the wild sea.

In the difficulty of hearing anything but wind and waves, and in the crowd, and the unspeakable confusion, and my first breathless efforts to stand against the weather, I was so confused that I looked out to sea for the wreck, and saw nothing but the foaming heads of the great waves. A half-dressed boatman, standing next me, pointed to the left. Then I saw it, close in upon us!

One mast was broken short off, six or eight feet from the deck, and lay over the side, entangled in a maze of sail and rigging; and all that ruin, as the ship rolled and beat—which she did without a moment's pause, and with a violence quite inconceivable—beat the side as if it would stave it in. Some efforts were even then being made to cut this portion of the wreck away; for, as the ship, which was broadside on, turned

towards us in her rolling, I plainly descried her people at work with axes, especially one active figure with long curling hair, conspicuous among the rest. But, a great cry which was audible even above the wind and water, rose from the shore at this moment; the sea, sweeping over the rolling wreck, made a clean breach, and carried men, spars, casks, planks, bulwarks, heaps of such toys, into the boiling surge.

The second mast was yet standing, with the rags of a rent sail, and a wild confusion of broken cordage flapping to and fro. The ship had struck once, the same boatman hoarsely said in my ear, and then lifted in and struck again. I understood him to add that she was parting amidships, and I could readily suppose so, for the rolling and beating were too tremendous for any human work to suffer long. As he spoke, there was another great cry of pity from the beach; four men arose with the wreck out of the deep, clinging to the rigging of the remaining mast; uppermost, the active figure with the curling hair.

There was a bell on board; and as the ship rolled and dashed, the bell rang; and its sound, the knell of those unhappy men, was borne towards us on the wind. Again we lost her, and again she rose. Two men were gone. I noticed that some new sensation moved the people on the beach, and saw them part, and Ham come breaking through them to the front.

I ran to him. I held him back with both arms; and implored the men with whom I had been speaking not to listen to him, not to do murder, not to let him stir from off that sand!

Another cry arose on shore; and looking to the wreck, we saw the cruel sail, with blow on blow, beat off the lower of the two men, and fly up in triumph round the active figure left alone upon the mast.

Against such a sight, and against such determination as that of the calmly desperate man who was already accustomed to lead half the people present, I might as hopefully have entreated the wind. "Mas'r Davy," he said cheerily grasping me by both hands, "if my time is come, 'tis come. If 'tan't I'll bide it. Lord above bless you, and bless all! Mates, make me ready! I'm a going off!"

I was swept away, but not unkindly, to some distance, where the people around me made me stay. Then, I saw him standing alone, in a seaman's frock and trowsers: a rope in his hand, or

slung to his wrist: another round his body: and several of the best men holding, at a little distance, to the latter, which he laid out himself, slack upon the shore, at his feet.

The wreck, even to my unpractised eye, was breaking up. I saw that she was parting in the middle, and that the life of the solitary man upon the mast hung by a thread. Still, he clung to it. He had a singular red cap on—not like a sailor's cap, but of a finer colour; and as the few yielding planks between him and destruction rolled and bulged, and his anticipative death-knell rung, he was seen by all of us to wave it. I saw him do it now, and thought I was going distracted, when his action brought an old remembrance to my mind of a once dear friend.

Ham watched the sea, standing alone, with the silence of suspended breath behind him, and the storm before, until there was a great retiring wave, when, with a backward glance at those who held the rope which was made fast round his body, he dashed in after it, and in a moment was buffetted with the water; rising with the hills, falling with the valleys, lost beneath the foam; then drawn again to land.

Once again he neared the wreck. He was so near, that with one more of his vigorous strokes he would be clinging to it—when, a high, green, vast hill-side of water, moving on shoreward, from beyond the ship, he seemed to leap up into it with a mighty bound, and the ship was gone!

They drew him to my very feet—insensible—dead. He was carried to the nearest house; and, no one preventing me now, I remained near him, busy, while every means of restoration were tried; but he had been beaten to death by the great wave, and his generous heart was stilled for ever!

As I sat beside the bed, when hope was abandoned and all was done, a fisherman, who had known me when Emily and I were children, and ever since, whispered my name at the door.

“Sir,” said he, with tears starting to his weather-beaten face, which, with his trembling lips, was ashy pale, “will you come over yonder?”

The old remembrance that had been recalled to me was in his look. I asked him, terror-stricken, leaning on the arm he held out to support me:

“Has a body come ashore?”

He said, “Yes.”

“Do I know it?” I asked then.

He answered nothing.

But, he led me to the shore. And on that part of it where she and I had looked for shells, two children—on that part of it where some lighter fragments of the old boat, blown down last night, had been scattered by the wind—among the ruins of the home he had wronged—I saw him lying with his head upon his arm, as I had often seen him lie at school.—STEERFORTH!

[By kind permission of Messrs. Chapman and Hall.]

GABRIEL GRUB.

(*Condensed.*)

IN an old abbey town, a long, long while ago, there officiated as sexton and grave-digger in the churchyard, one Gabriel Grub. He was an ill-conditioned, cross-grained, surly fellow—a morose and lonely man, who consorted with nobody but himself, and an old wicker bottle which fitted into his large deep waistcoat pocket—and who eyed each merry face, as it passed him by, with such a deep scowl of malice and ill-humour, as it was difficult to meet, without feeling something the worse for.

A little before twilight, one Christmas eve, Gabriel shouldered his spade, lighted his lantern, and betook himself towards the old churchyard; for he had got a grave to finish by next morning. As he went his way, up the ancient street, he marked the bustling preparations for next day's cheer, and smelt the numerous savoury odours consequent thereupon. This was gall and wormwood to the heart of Gabriel Grub; and when groups of children bounded out of the houses, and were met, before they could knock at the opposite door, by half a dozen curly-headed little rascals who flocked upstairs to their Christmas games, Gabriel smiled grimly, as he thought of measles, scarlet-fever, thrush, whooping-cough, and a good many other sources of consolation besides.

In this happy frame of mind, Gabriel strode along, and entered the churchyard, locking the gate behind him.

He took off his coat, put down his lantern, and getting into the unfinished grave, worked at it with right good will, and looked down into it when he had finished for the night, with grim satisfaction; murmuring as he gathered up his things:—

Brave lodgings for one, brave lodgings for one,
A few feet of cold earth, when life is done ;
A stone at the head, a stone at the feet,
A rich, juicy meal for the worms to eat ;
Rank grass overhead, and damp clay around,
Brave lodgings for one, these, in holy ground !

"Ho! ho!" laughed Gabriel Grub, as he sat himself down on a flat tombstone which was a favourite resting-place of his; and drew forth his wicker bottle. "A coffin at Christmas! A Christmas Box! Ho! ho! ho!"

"Ho! ho! ho!" repeated a voice which sounded close behind him. Gabriel paused, in some alarm, in the act of raising the wicker bottle to his lips, and looked round.

"It was the echoes," said Gabriel Grub.

"It was *not*," said a deep voice.

Gabriel started up—his eyes rested on a form that made his blood run cold. Seated on an upright tombstone, close to him, was a strange unearthly figure, whom Gabriel felt at once was no being of this world. His long fantastic legs which might have reached the ground, were cocked up, and crossed after a quaint, fantastic fashion; his sinewy arms were bare; and his hands rested on his knees. On his short round body he wore a close covering, ornamented with small slashes; a short cloak dangled at his back; the collar was cut into curious peaks, which served the goblin in lieu of ruff or neckerchief; and his shoes curled up at his toes into long points. On his head, he wore a broad-brimmed sugar-loaf hat, garnished with a single feather. The hat was covered with the white frost; and the goblin looked as if he had sat on the same tombstone very comfortably for two or three hundred years.

"What do you do here on Christmas Eve?" said the goblin sternly.

"I came to dig a grave, sir," stammered Gabriel Grub.

"What man wanders among graves and churchyards on such a night as this?"

"Gabriel Grub! Gabriel Grub!" screamed a wild chorus of voices that seemed to fill the churchyard. Gabriel looked fearfully round—nothing was to be seen.

"What have you got in that bottle?" said the goblin.

"Hollands, sir."

"Who drinks Hollands alone, and in a churchyard, on such a night as this?"

"Gabriel Grub! Gabriel Grub!" exclaimed the wild voices again.

"And who, then, is our fair and lawful prize?"

"Gabriel Grub! Gabriel Grub!"

"Well, Gabriel, what do you say to this? What do you think of this, Gabriel?"

"It's—it's—very curious, sir," replied the sexton, half dead with fright; "very curious, and very pretty, but I think I'll go back and finish my work, sir, if you please."

"Work! what work?"

"The grave, sir; making the grave."

"Oh, the grave, eh? who makes graves at a time when all other men are merry, and takes a pleasure in it?"

Again the mysterious voices replied, "Gabriel Grub! Gabriel Grub!"

"I'm afraid my friends want you, Gabriel," said the goblin.

"Under favour, sir, I don't think they can, sir; they don't know me, sir; I don't think the gentlemen have ever seen me, sir."

"Oh, yes, they have," replied the goblin; "we know the man with the sulky face and grim scowl, that came down the street to-night, throwing his evil looks at the children, and grasping his burying spade the tighter."

Here the goblin gave a loud shrill laugh, which the echoes returned twentyfold.

"I—I—am afraid I must leave you, sir," said the sexton.

"Leave us! Gabriel Grub going to leave us. Ho! ho! ho!"

As the goblin laughed, the sexton observed, for one instant, a brilliant illumination within the windows of the church, as if the whole building were lighted up; it disappeared, the organ pealed forth a lively air, and whole troops of goblins, the very counterpart of the first one, poured into the churchyard, and began playing at leap-frog with the tombstones. The first goblin was a most astonishing leaper, and none of the others could come near him; even in the extremity of his terror the sexton could not help observing, that while his friends were content to leap over the common-sized gravestones, the first one took the family vaults, iron railings and all.

At last the game reached to a most exciting pitch; the organ

played quicker and quicker, and the goblins leaped faster and faster. The sexton's brain whirled round, when the goblin king, suddenly darting towards him, laid his hand upon his collar, and sank with him through the earth.

Gabriel Grub found himself in what appeared to be a large cavern, surrounded on all sides by crowds of goblins, ugly and grim; in the centre of the room, on an elevated seat, was stationed his friend of the churchyard.

"Cold to-night," said the king of the goblins, "very cold. A glass of something warm, here!"

"Ah!" cried the goblin, whose cheeks and throat were transparent, as he tossed down the liquid fire, "this warms one, indeed! Bring a bumper of the same, for Mr. Grub."

One of the goblins held him while another poured the blazing liquid down his throat; the whole assembly screeched with laughter as he coughed and choked, and wiped away the tears which gushed plentifully from his eyes, after swallowing the burning draught.

"And now," said the king, "and now show the man of misery and gloom a few of the pictures from our own great storehouse!"

As the goblin said this, a thick cloud rolled away, and disclosed a small and scantily furnished, but neat and clean apartment. A crowd of little children were gathered round a bright fire, clinging to their mother's gown, and gambolling around her chair. A frugal meal was ready spread upon the table, and an elbow chair was placed near the fire. A knock was heard at the door; the mother opened it, and the children crowded round her, and clapped their hands for joy, as their father entered. Then, as he sat down to his meal before the fire, the children climbed about his knee, and the mother sat by his side, and all seemed happiness and comfort.

But a change came upon the view, almost imperceptibly. The scene was altered to a small bed-room, where the fairest and youngest child lay dying; the roses had fled from his cheek, and the light from his eye; and even as the sexton looked upon him with an interest he had never felt or known before, he died. His young brothers and sisters crowded round his little bed, and seized his tiny hand, so cold and heavy; they looked with awe on his infant face, for they saw that he was dead, and they knew that he was an Angel looking down upon, and blessing them, from a bright and happy Heaven.

Again the subject changed. The father and mother were old and helpless now, and the number of those about them was diminished more than half; but content and cheerfulness sat on every face, and beamed in every eye, as they crowded round the fireside, and told and listened to old stories of earlier and bygone days. Slowly and peacefully, the father sank into the grave, and, soon after, the sharer of all his cares and troubles followed him to a place of rest. The few, who yet survived them, knelt by their tomb, and watered the green turf which covered it, with their tears; then rose, and turned away, sadly and mournfully, but not with bitter cries, or despairing lamentations, for they knew that they should one day meet again; and once more they mixed with the busy world, and their content and cheerfulness were restored. Then the cloud settled upon the picture, and concealed it from the sexton's view.

"What do you think of *that*?" said the goblin, turning his large face towards Gabriel Grub.

Gabriel murmured out something about its being very pretty, and looked somewhat ashamed, as the goblin bent his fiery eyes upon him.

"*You* a miserable man!" said the goblin, in a tone of excessive contempt. "You!" He appeared disposed to add more, but indignation choked his utterance, so he lifted up one of his very pliable legs, and flourishing it above his head a little, to insure his aim, administered a good sound kick to Gabriel Grub; immediately after which, all the goblins in waiting crowded round the wretched sexton, and kicked him without mercy, according to the established and invariable custom of courtiers upon earth, who kick whom royalty kicks, and hug whom royalty hugs.

"Show him some more!" said the king of the goblins.

Many a time the cloud went and came, and many a lesson it taught to Gabriel Grub. Amongst the rest he saw that women, the tenderest and most fragile of all God's creatures, were the oftenest superior to sorrow, adversity, and distress; and he saw that it was because they bore, in their own hearts, an inexhaustible well-spring of affection and devotion. Above all, he saw that men like himself, who snarled at the mirth and cheerfulness of others, were the foulest weeds on the fair surface of the earth; and setting all the good of the world against the evil, he came to the conclusion that it was a very decent and respectable sort of

world after all. No sooner had he formed it, than the cloud which closed over the last picture seemed to settle on his senses, and lull him to repose. One by one the goblins faded from his sight; and as the last one disappeared, he sunk to sleep.

The day had broken when Gabriel Grub awoke, and found himself lying at full length on the flat grave-stone in the churchyard, with the wicker bottle lying empty by his side, and his coat, spade, and lantern, all well whitened by the last night's frost, scattered on the ground. At first he began to doubt the reality of his adventures, but the acute pain in his shoulders when he attempted to rise, assured him that the kicking of the goblins was certainly not ideal. So, Gabriel Grub got on his feet as well as he could, for the pain in his back; and brushing the frost off his coat, put it on, and turned his face towards the town.

But he was an altered man, and he could not bear the thought of returning to a place where his repentance would be scoffed at, and his reformation disbelieved. He hesitated for a few moments, and then turned away to wander where he might, and seek his bread elsewhere.

He lived to a very advanced age—a ragged, contented, rheumatic old man.

THE DUTIES OF A SECRETARY

"I BROUGHT this card from the General Agency Office, sir," said Nicholas, "wishing to offer myself as your secretary, and understanding that you stood in need of one."

"That's all you have come for, is it?" said Mr. Gregsbury, eyeing him in some doubt.

Nicholas replied in the affirmative.

"You have no connection with any of those rascally papers, have you? You didn't get into the room to hear what was going forward, and put it in print, eh?"

"I have no connection, I am sorry to say, with anything at present."

"Oh! How did you find your way up here, then?"

Nicholas related how he had been forced up by the deputation.

"That was the way, was it? Sit down."

Nicholas took a chair, and Mr. Gregsbury stared at him for a

long time, as if to make certain, before he asked any further questions, that there were no objections to his outward appearance.

"You want to be my secretary, do you?" he said at length.

"I wish to be employed in that capacity, sir," replied Nicholas.

"Well; now, what can you do?"

"I suppose that I can do what falls usually to the lot of other secretaries."

"What's that?"

"A secretary's duties are rather difficult to define, perhaps," said Nicholas, considering. "They include, I presume, correspondence?"

"Good."

"The arrangement of papers and documents."

"Very good."

"Occasionally, perhaps, the writing from your dictation; and possibly, sir," said Nicholas with a half-smile, "the copying of your speech for some public journal, when you have made one of more than usual importance."

"Certainly," rejoined Mr. Gregsbury. "What else?"

"Really, I am not able, at this instant, to recapitulate any other duty of a secretary, beyond the general one of making himself as agreeable and useful to his employer as he can, consistently with his own respectability, and without overstepping that line of duties which he undertakes to perform, and which the designation of his office is usually understood to imply."

"This is all very well, Mr. — what is your name?"

"Nickleby."

"This is all very well, Mr. Nickleby, and very proper, so far as it goes—so far as it goes, but it doesn't go far enough. There are other duties, Mr. Nickleby, which a secretary to a parliamentary gentleman must never lose sight of. I should require to be crammed, sir."

"I beg your pardon."

"—To be crammed, sir," repeated Mr. Gregsbury.

"May I beg your pardon again, if I inquire what you mean, sir?"

"My meaning, sir, is perfectly plain. My secretary would have to make himself master of the foreign policy of the world as it is mirrored in the newspapers; to run his eye over all accounts of public meetings, all leading articles, and accounts of the proceed-

ings of public bodies; and to make notes of anything which it appeared to him might be made a point of, in any little speech upon the question of some petition lying on the table, or anything of that kind. Do you understand?"

"I think I do, sir."

"Then, it would be necessary for him to make himself acquainted, from day to day, with newspaper paragraphs on passing events; such as, 'Mysterious disappearance and supposed suicide of a potboy,' or anything of that sort, upon which I might found a question to the Secretary of State for the Home Department. Then, he would have to copy the question, and as much as I remembered of the answer (including a little compliment about independence and good sense); and to send the manuscript in a frank to the local paper, with perhaps half-a-dozen lines of leader, to the effect that I was always to be found in my place in Parliament, and never shrunk from the responsible and arduous duties, and so forth. You see?"

Nicholas bowed.

"Besides which, I should expect him, now and then, to go through a few figures in the printed tables, and to pick out a few results, so that I might come out pretty well on timber-duty questions, and finance questions, and so on; and I should like him to get up a few little arguments about the disastrous effects of a return to cash payments and a metallic currency, with a touch now and then about the exportation of bullion, and the Emperor of Russia, and bank notes, and all that kind of thing, which it's only necessary to talk fluently about, because nobody understands it. Do you take me?"

"I think I understand," said Nicholas.

"With regard to such questions as are not political, and which one can't be expected to care about, beyond the natural care of not allowing inferior people to be as well off as ourselves—else where are our privileges?—I should wish my secretary to get together a few little flourishing speeches of a patriotic cast. For instance, if any preposterous bill were brought forward for giving poor grubbing authors a right to their own property, I should like to say that I, for one, would never consent to opposing an insurmountable bar to the diffusion of literature among *the people*,—you understand?—that the creations of the pocket, being man's, might belong to one man, or one family; but that the creations

of the brain, being God's, ought, as a matter of course, to belong to the people at large—and if I was pleasantly disposed, I should like to make a joke about posterity, and say that those who wrote for posterity should be content to be rewarded by the approbation of posterity; it might take with the House, and could never do me any harm, because posterity can't be expected to know anything about me, or my jokes either—do you see?"

"I see that, sir," replied Nicholas.

"You must always bear in mind, in such cases as this, where our interests are not affected, to put it very strong about the people, because it comes out very well at election-time; and you could be as funny as you liked about the authors; because I believe the greater part of them live in lodgings, and are not voters. This is a hasty outline of the chief things you'd have to do, except waiting in the lobby every night, in case I forgot anything, and should want fresh cramming; and, now and then, during great debates, sitting in the front row of the gallery, and saying to the people about—'You see that gentleman, with his hand to his face, and his arm twisted round the pillar—that's Mr. Gregsbury—the celebrated Mr. Gregsbury,'—with any other little eulogium that might strike you at the moment. And for salary," said Mr. Gregsbury, winding up with great rapidity; for he was out of breath—"and for salary I don't mind saying at once in round numbers, to prevent any dissatisfaction—though it's more than I've been accustomed to give—fifteen shillings a week, and find yourself. There!"

With this handsome offer, Mr. Gregsbury once more threw himself back in his chair, and looked like a man who had been most profligately liberal, but is determined not to repent of it notwithstanding.

"Fifteen shillings a week is not much," said Nicholas, mildly.

"Not much! Fifteen shillings a week not much, young man! Fifteen shillings a week"—

"Pray do not suppose that I quarrel with the sum, sir; for I am not ashamed to confess that, whatever it may be in itself, to me it is a great deal. But the duties and responsibilities make the recompense small, and they are so very heavy that I fear to undertake them."

"Do you decline to undertake them, sir?" inquired Mr. Gregsbury, with his hand on the bell-rope.

"I fear they are too great for my powers, however good my will may be, sir."

"That is as much as to say that you had rather not accept the place, and that you consider fifteen shillings a week too little. Do you decline it, sir?"

"I have no alternative but to do so."

"Door, Matthews!"

"I am sorry I have troubled you unnecessarily, sir."

"I am sorry you have. Door, Matthews!"

"Good morning, sir."

"Door, Matthews!"

The boy beckoned Nicholas, and, tumbling lazily downstairs before him, opened the door, and ushered him into the street.

BOB SAWYER'S PARTY.

(Adapted.)

THERE is a repose about Lant Street, in the Borough, which sheds a gentle melancholy upon the soul. A house in Lant Street would not come within the denomination of a first-rate residence, in the strict acceptation of the term. If a man wished to abstract himself from the world—to remove himself from within the reach of temptation—to place himself beyond the possibility of any inducement to look out of the window—he should by all means go to Lant Street.

In this happy retreat the majority of the inhabitants either direct their energies to the letting of furnished apartments, or devote themselves to the healthful and invigorating pursuit of mangling. The chief features in the still life of the street are green shutters, lodging-bills, brass door-plates, and bell-handles; the principal specimens of animated nature, the pot-boy, the muffin-youth, and the baked-potato man. The population is migratory, usually disappearing on the verge of quarter-day, and generally by night. His Majesty's revenues are seldom collected in this happy valley; the rents are dubious; and the water communication is very frequently cut off.

Mr. Bob Sawyer embellished one side of the fire, in his first-floor front, early on the evening for which he had invited Mr. Pickwick; and Mr. Ben Allen the other. The preparations for the reception of visitors appeared to be completed.

Notwithstanding the highly satisfactory nature of these arrangements, there was a cloud on the countenance of Mr. Bob Sawyer, as he sat by the fireside. There was a sympathising expression, too, in the features of Mr. Ben Allen, as he gazed intently on the coals; and a tone of melancholy in his voice, as he said:

"Well, it is unlucky she should have taken it in her head to turn sour, just on this occasion. She might at least have waited till to-morrow."

"That's her malevolence, that's her malevolence," returned Mr. Bob Sawyer. "She says that if I can afford to give a party I ought to be able to pay her 'little bill.'"

"How long has it been running?" inquired Mr. Ben Allen. A bill, by-the-bye, is the most extraordinary locomotive engine that the genius of man ever produced. It would keep on running during the longest lifetime, without ever once stopping of its own accord.

"Only a quarter, and a month or so," replied Mr. Bob Sawyer.

"It'll be a very unpleasant thing if she takes it into her head to let out, when those fellows are here, won't it?" said Mr. Ben Allen.

"Horrible," replied Bob Sawyer, "horrible."

A low tap was heard at the room door. Mr. Bob Sawyer looked expressively at his friend, and bade the tapper come in; whereupon a dirty slipshod girl in black cotton stockings thrust in her head, and said:

"Please, Mister Sawyer, Missis Raddle wants to speak to *you*."

Before Mr. Bob Sawyer could return any answer, the girl suddenly disappeared with a jerk, as if somebody had given her a violent pull behind. Then there was another tap at the door, and Mr. Bob Sawyer once more cried "Come in!"

A little fierce woman bounced into the room, all in a tremble with passion, and pale with rage.

"Now, Mr. Sawyer, if you'll have the kindness to settle that little bill of mine I'll thank you, because I've got my rent to pay this afternoon, and my landlord's a waiting below now." Here the little woman rubbed her hands, and looked steadily over Mr. Bob Sawyer's head, at the wall behind him.

"I am very sorry to put you to any inconvenience, Mrs. Raddle, but"——

"Oh, it isn't any inconvenience. I didn't want it particular before to-day; leastways, as it has to go to my landlord directly,

it was as well for you to keep it as me. You promised me this afternoon, Mr. Sawyer, and every gentleman as has ever lived here has kept his word, sir, as of course anybody as calls himself a gentleman does."

"I am very sorry, Mrs. Raddle," said Bob Sawyer, "but the fact is, that I have been disappointed in the City to-day." Extraordinary place that City. An astonishing number of men always *are* getting disappointed there.

"Well, Mr. Sawyer, and what's that to me, sir?"

"I—I—have no doubt, Mrs. Raddle, that before the middle of next week we shall be able to set ourselves quite square, and go on, on a better system, afterwards."

This was all Mrs. Raddle wanted. She had bustled up to the apartment of the unlucky Bob Sawyer, so bent upon going into a passion, that, in all probability, payment would have rather disappointed her than otherwise. She was in excellent order for a little relaxation of the kind, having just exchanged a few introductory compliments with Mr. R. in the front kitchen.

"Do you suppose, Mr. Sawyer," said Mrs. Raddle, elevating her voice for the information of the neighbours, "do you suppose that I'm a-going day after day to let a fellar occupy my lodgings as never thinks of paying his rent, nor even the very money laid out for the fresh butter and lump sugar that's bought for his breakfast, and the very milk that's took in, at the street door? Do you suppose a hard-working and industrious woman as has lived in this street for twenty year (ten year over the way, and nine year and three quarter in this very house) has nothing else to do but to work herself to death after a parcel of lazy, idle fellars, that are always smoking, and drinking, and lounging, when they ought to be glad to turn their hands to anything that would help 'em to pay their bills. Do you"——

"My good soul," interposed Mr Benjamin Allen, soothingly.

"Have the goodness to keep your observashuns to yourself, sir, I beg," said Mrs. Raddle, suddenly arresting the rapid torrent of her speech, and addressing the third party with impressive slowness and solemnity. "I am not aweer, sir, that you have any right to address your conversation to me. I don't think I let these apartments to you, sir."

"No, you certainly did not," said Mr. Benjamin Allen.

"Very good, sir," responded Mrs. Raddle, with lofty politeness.

"Then, p'raps, sir, you'll confine yourself to breaking the arms and legs of the poor people in the hospitals, and keep yourself to yourself, sir, or there may be some persons here as will make you, sir."

"But you are such an unreasonable woman."

"I beg your pardon, young man, but will you have the goodness just to call me that again, sir?"

"I didn't make use of the word in any invidious sense, ma'am."

"I beg your pardon, young man, but who do you call a woman? Did you make that remark to me, sir? Did you apply that name to me, I ask of you, sir?"

"Why, of course I did."

"Yes, of course you did," said Mrs. Raddle, backing gradually to the door, and raising her voice to its loudest pitch, for the special behoof of Mr. Raddle in the kitchen. "Yes, of course you did! And everybody knows that they may safely insult me in my own house while my husband sits sleeping downstairs, and taking no more notice than if I was a dog in the streets. He ought to be ashamed of himself (here Mrs. Raddle sobbed) to allow his wife to be treated in this way by a parcel of young cutters and carvers of live people's bodies, that disgraces the lodgings (another sob), and leaving her exposed to all manner of abuse; a base, faint-hearted, timorous wretch, that's afraid to come upstairs, and face the ruffianly creatures—that's afraid—that's afraid to come!" Mrs. Raddle paused to listen whether the repetition of the taunt had roused her better half; and, finding that it had not been successful, proceeded to descend the stairs with sobs innumerable: when there came a loud double knock at the street door.

"Does Mr. Sawyer live here?" said Mr. Pickwick, when the door was opened.

"Yes," said the girl, "first floor. It's the door straight afore you, when you gets to the top of the stairs."

"How are you?" said Bob Sawyer. "Glad to see you—take care of the glasses." This caution was addressed to Mr. Pickwick, who had put his hat on the tray.

"Dear me, I beg your pardon."

"Don't mention it, don't mention it. I'm rather confined for room here, but you must put up with all that, when you come to see a young bachelor. Walk in. You've seen this gentleman before, I think?" Mr. Pickwick shook hands with Mr. Benjamin

Allen, and his friends followed his example. They had scarcely taken their seats when there was another double knock.

"I hope that's Jack Hopkins!" said Mr. Bob Sawyer. "Hush! Yes, it is. Come up, Jack; come up."

A heavy footstep was heard upon the stairs, and Jack Hopkins presented himself.

"You're late, Jack?" said Mr. Benjamin Allen.

"Been detained at Bartholomew's," replied Hopkins.

"Anything new?"

"No, nothing particular. Rather a good accident brought into the casualty ward."

"What was that, sir?" inquired Mr. Pickwick.

"Only a man fallen out of a four pair of stairs' window;—but it's a very fair case—very fair case indeed."

"Do you mean that the patient is in a fair way to recover?" inquired Mr. Pickwick.

"No, no, I should rather say he wouldn't. There must be a splendid operation, though, to-morrow—magnificent sight if Slasher does it."

"You consider Mr. Slasher a good operator?" said Mr. Pickwick.

"Best alive. Took a boy's leg out of the socket last week—boy ate five apples and a gingerbread cake; exactly two minutes after it was all over, boy said he wouldn't lie there to be made game of, and he'd tell his mother if they didn't begin."

"Dear me!" said Mr. Pickwick astonished.

"Pooh! That's nothing, that ain't. Is it, Bob?"

"Nothing at all," replied Mr. Bob Sawyer.

"By the bye, Bob," said Hopkins, with a scarcely perceptible glance at Mr. Pickwick's attentive face, "we had a curious accident last night. A child was brought in, who had swallowed a necklace."

"Swallowed what, sir?" interrupted Mr. Pickwick.

"A necklace. Not all at once, you know, that would be too much—you couldn't swallow that, if the child did—eh, Mr. Pickwick, ha! ha! No, the way was this. Child's parents were poor people who lived in a court. Child's eldest sister bought a necklace; common necklace, made of large black wooden beads. Child, being fond of toys, cribbed the necklace, hid it, played with it, cut the string, and swallowed a bead. Child thought it capital fun, went back next day, and swallowed another bead. Next day, child swallowed two beads; the day after that, he

treated himself to three, and so on, till in a week's time he had got through the necklace—five and twenty beads in all. The sister, who was an industrious girl, and seldom treated herself to a bit of finery, cried her eyes out, at the loss of the necklace; looked high and low for it; but, I needn't say, didn't find it. A few days afterwards, the family were at dinner—baked shoulder of mutton, and potatoes under it—the child, who wasn't hungry, was playing about the room, when suddenly there was heard a noise, like a small hail storm. 'Don't do that, my boy,' said the father. 'I ain't a doin' nothing,' said the child. 'Well, don't do it again,' said the father. There was a short silence, and then the noise began again, worse than ever. 'If you don't mind what I say, my boy,' said the father, 'you'll find yourself in bed, in something less than a pig's whisper.' He gave the child a shake to make him obedient, and such a rattling ensued as nobody ever heard before. 'Why, it's *in* the child!' said the father, 'he's got the croup in the wrong place!' 'No, I haven't father,' said the child, beginning to cry, 'it's the necklace; I swallowed it, father.' The father caught the child up, and ran with him to the hospital: the beads in the boy's stomach rattling all the way with the jolting; and the people looking up in the air, and down in the cellars, to see where the unusual sound came from. He's in the hospital now, and he makes such a noise when he walks about, that they're obliged to muffle him in a watchman's coat, for fear he should wake the patients!"

"That's the most extraordinary case I ever heard of," said Mr. Pickwick, with an emphatic blow on the table.

Another knock at the door announced a large-headed young man in a black wig, who brought with him a youth in a long stock. The next comer was a gentleman in a shirt emblazoned with pink anchors, who was closely followed by a pale youth with a plated watchguard. The arrival of a prim personage in clean linen and cloth boots rendered the party complete. Mr. Bob Sawyer rang for supper, and the visitors squeezed themselves into corners while it was getting ready.

It was not so easily got ready as some people may imagine. First of all, it was necessary to awaken the girl, who had fallen asleep with her face on the kitchen table; this took a little time, and, even when she did answer the bell, another quarter of an hour was consumed in fruitless endeavours to impart to her a faint

and distant glimmering of reason. The man to whom the order for the oysters had been sent, had not been told to open them; it is a very difficult thing to open an oyster with a limp knife or a two-pronged fork; and very little was done in this way. Very little of the beef was done either; and the ham (which was also from the German-sausage shop round the corner) was in a similar predicament. However, there was plenty of porter in a tin can; and the cheese went a great way, for it was very strong.

After supper, a jug of punch was put upon the table, together with a paper of cigars, and a couple of bottles of spirits. Then, there was an awful pause; and this awful pause was occasioned by a very common occurrence in this sort of places, but a very embarrassing one notwithstanding.

The fact is, the girl was washing the glasses.

It is a very ill wind that blows nobody any good. The prim man in the cloth boots, who had been unsuccessfully attempting to make a joke during the whole time the round game lasted, saw his opportunity, and availed himself of it. He commenced a long story about a great public character, whose name he had forgotten, making a particularly happy reply to another eminent and illustrious individual whom he had never been able to identify. But for the life of him he couldn't recollect at that precise moment what the anecdote was, although he had been in the habit of telling the story with great applause for the last ten years.

The prim man arrived at this point, just as the glasses came back. Bob Sawyer's face brightened up, and he began to feel quite convivial.

"Now Betsy," said he, "the warm water: be brisk, there's a good girl."

"You can't have no warm water," replied Betsy.

"No warm water!"

"No. Missis Raddle said you warn't to have none."

"Bring up the warm water instantly—instantly!"

"No. I can't; Missis Raddle raked out the kitchen fire afore she went to bed, and locked up the kittle."

"Oh, never mind; never mind. Pray don't disturb yourself about such a trifle," said Mr. Pickwick, "cold water will do very well."

"My landlady is subject to some slight attacks of mental derangement," remarked Bob Sawyer with a ghastly smile; "and I fear I must give her warning."

"No, don't," said Ben Allen.

"I fear I must," said Bob with heroic firmness. "I'll pay her what I owe her, and give her warning to-morrow morning." Poor fellow! how devoutly he wished he could!

Mr. Bob Sawyer's heart-sickening attempts to rally under this last blow, communicated a dispiriting influence to the company; hostilities between the youth in the long stock and the gentleman in the shirt shortly afterwards commenced.

"Sawyer," said the youth, in a loud voice.

"Well, Noddy."

"I should be very sorry, Sawyer, to create any unpleasantness at any friend's table, and much less at yours, Sawyer—very; but I must take this opportunity of informing Mr. Gunter that he is no gentleman."

"And I should be very sorry, Sawyer, to create any disturbance in the street in which you reside," said Mr. Gunter, "but I'm afraid I shall be under the necessity of alarming the neighbours by throwing the person who has just spoken out o' the window."

"What do you mean by that, sir?" inquired Mr. Noddy.

"What I say, sir," replied Mr. Gunter.

"I should like to see you do it, sir."

"You shall *feel* me do it in half a minute, sir."

"I request that you'll favour me with your card, sir."

"I'll do nothing of the kind, sir."

"Why not, sir?"

"Because you'll stick it up over your chimney-piece, and delude your visitors into the false belief that a gentleman had been to see you, sir."

"Sir, a friend of mine shall wait on you in the morning."

"Sir, I'm very much obliged to you for the caution, and I'll leave particular directions with my servant to lock up the spoons."

At this point the remainder of the guests interposed, and remonstrated; on which Mr. Noddy professed that he had ever entertained a devoted personal attachment towards Mr. Gunter. To this Mr. Gunter replied that, upon the whole, he rather preferred Mr. Noddy to his own brother; on hearing which admission, Mr. Noddy magnanimously proffered his hand to Mr. Gunter. Mr. Gunter grasped it with affecting fervour; and everybody said that the whole dispute had been conducted in a manner which was highly honourable to both parties concerned.

"Now," said Jack Hopkins, "just to set us going again, Bob, I don't mind singing a song." And Hopkins, incited thereto, by tumultuous applause, plunged himself at once into "The King, God bless him," which he sang as loud as he could, to a novel air, compounded of the "Bay of Biscay," and "A Frog he would." The chorus was the essence of the song: and as each gentleman sang it to the tune he knew best, the effect was very striking indeed.

It was at the end of the chorus to the first verse, that Mr. Pickwick held up his hand in a listening attitude, and said, as soon as silence was restored:

"Hush! I beg your pardon. I thought I heard somebody calling from upstairs. I think I hear it now," said Mr. Pickwick. "Have the goodness to open the door."

The door was no sooner opened than all doubt on the subject was removed.

"Mr. Sawyer! Mr. Sawyer!" screamed a voice from the two-pair landing.

"It's my landlady," said Bob Sawyer, looking round him with great dismay. "Yes, Mrs. Raddle."

"What do you mean by this, Mr. Sawyer? Ain't it enough to be swindled out of one's rent, and money lent out of pocket beside, and abused and insulted by your friends that dares to call themselves men: without having the house turned out of window, and noise enough made to bring the fire-engines here, at two o'clock in the morning?—Turn them wretches away."

"You ought to be ashamed of yourselves," said the voice of Mr. Raddle, which appeared to proceed from beneath some distant bed-clothes.

"Ashamed of themselves!" said Mrs. Raddle. "Why don't you go down and knock 'em every one downstairs? You would if you was a man."

"I should if I was a dozen men, my dear," replied Mr. Raddle, pacifically, "but they've the advantage of me in numbers, my dear."

"Ugh, you coward!" replied Mrs. Raddle, with supreme contempt. "Do you mean to turn them wretches out, or not, Mr. Sawyer?"

"They're going, Mrs. Raddle, they're going. I'm afraid you'd better go. I *thought* you were making too much noise."

"Now, Mr. Sawyer! *are* them brutes going?"

"They're only looking for their hats, Mrs. Raddle; they are going directly."

"Going!" said Mrs. Raddle, thrusting her night-cap over the banisters just as Mr. Pickwick emerged from the sitting-room. "Going! What did they ever come for?"

"My dear ma'am," remonstrated Mr. Pickwick, looking up.

"Get along with you, you old wretch!" replied Mrs. Raddle, hastily withdrawing the night-cap. "Old enough to be his grandfather, you willin! You're worse than any of 'em."

Mr. Pickwick found it in vain to protest his innocence, so hurried downstairs into the street, whither he was closely followed by the rest.

The visitors having all departed, in compliance with the rather pressing request of Mrs. Raddle, the luckless Mr. Bob Sawyer was left alone, to meditate on the probable events of to-morrow, and the pleasures of the evening.

THE CONVICT'S RETURN.

THE CLERGYMAN'S STORY.

(Condensed,)

WHEN I first settled in this village, which is now just five and twenty years ago, the most notorious person among my parishioners was a man of the name of Edmunds, who leased a small farm near this spot. He was a morose, savage-hearted, bad man; idle and dissolute in his habits; cruel and ferocious in his disposition. Beyond the few lazy and reckless vagabonds with whom he sauntered away his time in the fields, or sotted in the ale-house, he had not a single friend or acquaintance; no one cared to speak to the man whom many feared, and every one detested—and Edmunds was shunned by all.

This man had a wife and one son, who, when I first came here, was about twelve years old. Of the acuteness of that woman's sufferings, of the gentle and enduring manner in which she bore them, of the agony of solicitude with which she reared that boy, no one can form an adequate conception. They were poor, but the woman's unceasing and unwearied exertions kept them above actual want. Those exertions were but ill repaid. During the

whole of this time, and when the poor creature often bore about her marks of ill-usage and violence which she could not wholly conceal, she was a constant attendant at our little church. Regularly every Sunday, morning and afternoon, she occupied the same seat with the boy at her side.

"Five or six years passed away; the boy had become a robust and well-grown youth. Time had bowed his mother's form, and enfeebled her steps; but the face that should have cheered her, no more looked upon her. The Bible was kept as carefully as ever; but there was no one to read it with her; and the tears fell thick and fast upon the book, and blotted the words from her eyes. That son, with reckless disregard of her breaking heart, and a sullen wilful forgetfulness of all she had done and borne for him, had linked himself with depraved and abandoned men, and was madly pursuing a headlong career, which must bring death to him, and shame to her?

Numerous offences had been committed in the neighbourhood. Young Edmunds was suspected with three companions. He was apprehended—committed—tried—condemned—to die.

The wild and piercing shriek from a woman's voice, which resounded through the court when the solemn sentence was pronounced, rings in my ears at this moment. That cry struck a terror to the culprit's heart, which trial, condemnation—the approach of death itself, had failed to awaken. The suffering mother's heart was breaking; but I never once heard complaint or murmur escape her lips. It was a piteous spectacle to see that woman in the prison yard attempting to soften the hard heart of her obdurate son. It was in vain. Not even the unlooked-for commutation of his sentence to transportation for fourteen years, softened for an instant the sullen hardihood of his demeanour.

At last she fell sick. She dragged her tottering limbs from the bed to visit her son once more, but her strength failed her, and she sank powerless on the ground. And now the boasted coldness and indifference of the young man were tested indeed. A day passed away and his mother was not there; another flew by, and she came not near him; a third evening arrived, and yet he had not seen her; and in four and twenty hours he was to be separated from her—perhaps for ever. Oh! how the long-forgotten thoughts of former days rushed upon his mind. His mother, the only parent he had ever known, lay ill—it might be

dying—within one mile of the ground he stood on; were he free and unfettered, a few minutes would place him by her side. He rushed to the gate, and grasping the iron rails with the energy of desperation, shook it till it rang again, and threw himself against the thick wall as if to force a passage through the stone; but the strong building mocked his feeble efforts, and he beat his hands together and wept like a child.

I bore the mother's forgiveness and blessing to her son in prison; and I carried his solemn assurance of repentance, and his fervent supplication for pardon, to her sick bed.

He was removed by night. A few weeks afterwards the poor woman's soul took its flight, I confidently hope, and solemnly believe, to a place of eternal happiness and rest.

On a fine Sunday evening, in the month of August, John Edmunds set foot in the village he had left with shame and disgrace seventeen years before. His nearest way lay through the churchyard. An old man entered the porch of the church, just as he reached it. Edmunds started back, for he knew him well; many a time he had watched him digging graves in the churchyard. What would *he* say to the returned convict? The old man raised his eyes to the stranger's face, bid him "good evening," and walked slowly on. He had forgotten him.

He walked down the hill, and through the village. Many a look was turned towards him, and many a doubtful glance he cast on either side to see whether any knew and shunned him. There were strange faces in almost every house; in some he recognised the burly form of some old schoolfellow—a boy when he last saw him—surrounded by a troop of merry children; in others he saw, seated in an easy-chair at a cottage door, a feeble and infirm old man, whom he only remembered as a hale and hearty labourer; but they had all forgotten him, and he passed on unknown.

The last soft light of the setting sun had fallen on the earth, casting a rich glow on the yellow corn sheaves, and lengthening the shadows of the orchard trees, as he stood before the old house—the home of his infancy—to which his heart had yearned with an intensity of affection not to be described, through long and weary years of captivity and sorrow. There were voices within the house. He listened, but they fell strangely upon his ear; he knew them not. The convict thought on the many times he had shrunk from his father's sight in that very place. He remembered

how often he had buried his trembling head beneath the bed-clothes, and heard the harsh word, and the hard stripe, and his mother's wailing; and though the man sobbed aloud with agony of mind as he left the spot, his fist was clenched, and his teeth were set, in fierce and deadly passion.

And such was his return! What was his loneliness in the wild thick woods, where man was never seen, to this! He walked slowly on; and shunning the roadside like a guilty man, turned into a meadow he well remembered; and covering his face with his hands, threw himself upon the grass. He had not observed that a man was lying on the bank beside him; his garments rustled as he turned round to steal a look at the new-comer; and Edmunds raised his head.

The man had moved into a sitting posture. His body was much bent, and his face was wrinkled and yellow. His dress denoted him an inmate of the workhouse: he had the appearance of being very old, but it looked more the effect of dissipation or disease, than length of years. He was staring hard at the stranger, and though his eyes were lustreless and heavy at first, they appeared to glow with an unnatural and alarmed expression after they had been fixed upon him for a short time, until they seemed to be starting from their sockets. Edmunds gradually raised himself to his knees, and looked more and more earnestly upon the old man's face. They gazed upon each other in silence.

The old man was ghastly pale. He shuddered and tottered to his feet. Edmunds sprang to his. He stepped back a pace or two. Edmunds advanced.

"Let me hear you speak," said the convict, in a thick broken voice.

"Stand off!" cried the old man, with a dreadful oath. The convict drew closer to him.

"Stand off!" shrieked the old man. Furious with terror he raised his stick, and struck Edmunds a heavy blow across the face.

"Father—devil!" murmured the convict, between his set teeth. He rushed wildly forward, and clenched the old man by the throat—but he was his father; and his arm fell powerless by his side.

The old man uttered a loud yell which rang through the lonely fields like the howl of an evil spirit. His face turned black: the gore rushed from his mouth and nose, and dyed the grass a deep

dark red, as he staggered and fell. He had ruptured a blood-vessel: and he was a dead man before his son could raise him.

* * * * *

In a corner of the churchyard there lies buried a man, who was in my employment for three years after this event; and who was truly contrite, penitent, and humbled, if ever man was. No one save myself knew in that man's lifetime who he was, or whence he came—it was John Edmunds, the returned convict.

THE DANCING ACADEMY

(Condensed.)

OF all the dancing academies that ever were established, there never was one more popular in its immediate vicinity than Signor Billsmethi's. It was not a dear dancing academy—four-and-sixpence a quarter is decidedly cheap upon the whole. It was *very* select, the number of pupils being strictly limited to seventy-five, and a quarter's payment in advance being rigidly exacted. There was public tuition and private tuition—an assembly-room and a parlour. Signor Billsmethi's family were always thrown in with the parlour, and included in parlour price; that is to say, a private pupil had Signor Billsmethi's parlour to dance *in*, and Signor Billsmethi's family to dance *with*; and, when he had been sufficiently broken in in the parlour, he began to run in couples in the assembly-room.

Such was the dancing academy of Signor Billsmethi, when Mr. Augustus Cooper, of Fetter-lane, first saw an advertisement walking leisurely down Holborn-hill, announcing to the world that Signor Billsmethi intended opening for the season with a Grand Ball.

Now, Mr. Augustus Cooper was in the oil and colour line—just of age, with a little money, a little business, and a little mother, who, having managed her husband and *his* business in his lifetime, took to managing her son and *his* business after his decease; and so, somehow or other, he had seen no more of the world than if he had been an infant all his days. So Mr. Augustus Cooper made up his mind that he would not stand it any longer. And he was walking down Holborn Hill, thinking about all these things, and wondering how he could manage to get introduced into genteel society for the first time, when his eyes rested on Signor Billsmethi's

announcement, which it immediately struck him was just the very thing he wanted; for he should be able to select a genteel circle of acquaintance at once, out of the five-and-seventy pupils at four-and-sixpence a quarter. So, he stopped the advertisement—an animated sandwich, composed of a boy between two boards—and, having procured a very small card with the Signor's address indented thereon, walked straight at once to the Signor's house—and very fast he walked too, for fear the list should be filled up, and the five-and-seventy completed, before he got there. The Signor was at home, and what was still more gratifying, he was an Englishman! Such a nice man—and so polite! The list was not full, but it was a most extraordinary circumstance that there was only just one vacancy, and even that one would have been filled up that very morning, only Signor Billsmethi was dissatisfied with the reference, and, being very much afraid that the lady wasn't select, wouldn't take her.

"And very much delighted I am, Mr. Cooper," said Signor Billsmethi, "that I did *not* take her. I assure you, Mr. Cooper—I don't say it to flatter you, for I know you're above it—that I consider myself extremely fortunate in having a gentleman of your manners and appearance, sir."

"I am very glad of it too, sir," said Augustus Cooper.

"And I hope we shall be better acquainted, sir," said Signor Billsmethi.

"And I'm sure I hope we shall too, sir," responded Augustus Cooper. Just then the door opened, and in came a young lady, with her hair curled in a crop all over her head, and her shoes tied in sandles all over her ankles.

"Don't run away, my dear," said Signor Billsmethi; "this is Mr. Cooper—Mr. Cooper, of Fetter-lane. Mr. Cooper, my daughter, sir,—Miss Billsmethi, sir, who I hope will have the pleasure of dancing many a quadrille, minuet, gavotte, country dance, fandango, double hornpipe, and farinagholkajingo with you, sir. She dances them all, sir; and so shall you, sir, before you're a quarter older, sir."

And Signor Billsmethi slapped Mr. Augustus Cooper on the back, as if he had known him a dozen years,—so friendly; and Mr. Cooper bowed to the young lady, and the young lady courtsied to him, and Signor Billsmethi said they were as handsome a pair as ever he'd wish to see; upon which the young lady blushed as

red as Mr. Cooper himself—you might have thought they were both standing under a red lamp at a chemist's shop; and, before Mr. Cooper went away, it was settled that he should join the family circle that very night—taking them just as they were—no ceremony nor nonsense of that kind—and learn his positions, in order that he might lose no time, and be able to come out at the forthcoming ball.

Well; Mr. Augustus Cooper went away to one of the cheap shoemakers' shops in Holborn where gentlemen's dress-pumps are seven-and-sixpence, and men's strong walking just nothing at all, and bought a pair of the regular seven-and-sixpenny, long-quartered town-mades, in which he astonished himself quite as much as his mother, and sallied forth to Signor Billsmethi's. There were four other private pupils in the parlour; two ladies and two gentlemen. Such nice people! Not a bit of pride about them. One of the ladies in particular, who was in training for a Columbine, was remarkably affable; and she and Miss Billsmethi took such an interest in Mr. Augustus Cooper, and joked and smiled, and looked so bewitching, that he got quite at home, and learnt his steps in no time. After the practising was over, Signor Billsmethi, and Miss Billsmethi, and Master Billsmethi, and a young lady, and the two ladies, and the two gentlemen danced a quadrille—none of your slipping and sliding about, but regular warm work, flying into corners, and diving among chairs, and shooting out at the door,—something like dancing! Signor Billsmethi in particular, notwithstanding his having a little fiddle to play all the time, was out on the landing every figure, and Master Billsmethi, when everybody else was breathless, danced a hornpipe, with a cane in his hand, and a cheese-plate on his head, to the unqualified admiration of the whole company. Then, Signor Billsmethi insisted, as they were so happy, that they should all stay to supper, and proposed sending Master Billsmethi for the beer and spirits, whereupon the two gentlemen said, “strike 'em vulgar if they'd stand that;” and was just going to quarrel who should pay for it, when Mr. Augustus Cooper said he would, if they'd have the kindness to allow him—and they *had* the kindness to allow him. During the evening Miss Billsmethi squeezed Mr. Augustus Cooper's hand under the table; and Mr. Augustus Cooper returned the squeeze, and returned home too, at something to six o'clock in the morning, when he was put to bed by the apprentice.

Weeks had worn on, and the seven-and-sixpenny town-mades had nearly worn out, when the night arrived for the grand dress-ball at which the whole of the five-and-seventy pupils were to meet together, for the first time that season, and to take out some portion of their respective four-and-sixpences in lamp-oil and fiddlers. Mr. Augustus Cooper had ordered a new coat for the occasion—a two-pound-tenner from Turnstile. It was his first appearance in public; and, after a grand Sicilian shawl-dance by fourteen young ladies in character, he was to open the quadrille department with Miss Billsmethi herself, with whom he had become quite intimate since his first introduction. It *was* a night! Everything was admirably arranged. The sandwich-boy took the hats and bonnets at the street-door; there was a turn-up bedstead in the back-parlour, on which Miss Billsmethi made tea and coffee for such of the gentlemen as chose to pay for it, and such of the ladies as the gentlemen treated; red port-wine negus and lemonade were handed round at eighteen-pence a head. In short, nothing could exceed the arrangements, except the company. Such ladies! Such pink silk stockings! Such artificial flowers! Such a number of cabs! No sooner had one cab set down a couple of ladies than another cab drove up and set down another couple of ladies, and they all knew, not only one another, but the majority of the gentlemen into the bargain, which made it all as pleasant and lively as could be. Signor Billsmethi, in black tights, with a large blue bow in his button-hole, introduced the ladies to such of the gentlemen as were strangers: and the ladies talked away—and laughed they did—it was delightful to see them.

As to the shawl-dance, it was the most exciting thing that ever was beheld; there was such a whisking, and rustling, and fanning, and getting ladies into a tangle with artificial flowers, and then disentangling them again! And as to Mr. Augustus Cooper's share in the quadrille, he got through it admirably. He was missing from his partner now and then, certainly, and discovered on such occasions to be either dancing with laudable perseverance in another set, or sliding about in perspective, without any definite object; but, generally speaking, they managed to shove him through the figure, until he turned up in the right place. Be this as it may, when he had finished, a great many ladies and gentlemen came up and complimented him very much, and said they had never seen a beginner do anything like it before; and Mr. Augustus

Cooper was perfectly satisfied with himself, and everybody else into the bargain; and "stood" considerable quantities of compounds, for the use and behoof of two or three dozen very particular friends, selected from the select circle of five-and-seventy pupils.

Now, whether it was the strength of the compounds, or the beauty of the ladies, or what not, it did so happen that Mr. Augustus Cooper encouraged, rather than repelled, the very flattering attentions of a young lady in brown gauze over white calico who had appeared particularly struck with him from the first; and, when the encouragements had been prolonged for some time, Miss Billsmethi betrayed her spite and jealousy thereat by calling the young lady in brown gauze a "creeter," which induced the young lady in brown gauze to retort in certain sentences containing a taunt founded on the payment of four-and-sixpence a quarter, which reference Mr. Augustus Cooper, being then and there in a state of considerable bewilderment, expressed his entire concurrence in. Miss Billsmethi, thus renounced, forthwith began screaming in the loudest key of her voice, at the rate of fourteen screams a minute; and being unsuccessful in an onslaught on the eyes and face, first of the lady in gauze and then of Mr. Augustus Cooper, called distractedly on the other three-and-seventy pupils to furnish her with oxalic acid for her own private drinking; and, the call not being honoured, made another rush at Mr. Cooper, and then was carried off to bed. Mr. Augustus Cooper, not being remarkable for quickness of apprehension, was at a loss to understand what all this meant, until Signor Billsmethi explained it in a most satisfactory manner, by stating to the pupils that Mr. Augustus Cooper had made and confirmed divers promises of marriage to his daughter on divers occasions, and had now basely deserted her; on which the indignation of the pupils became universal. The upshot of the matter was, that a lawyer's letter came next day, and an action was commenced next week; and that Mr. Augustus Cooper, after walking twice to the Serpentine for the purpose of drowning himself, and coming twice back without doing it, made a confidante of his mother, who compromised the matter with twenty pounds from the till: which made twenty pounds four shillings and sixpence paid to Signor Billsmethi, exclusive of treats and pumps. And Mr. Augustus Cooper went back and lived with his mother, and there he lives to this day.

THE RIVAL EDITORS.

(Adapted.)

"AND how are matters going on in Eatanswill?" inquired Mr. Pickwick, when Mr. Pott, the editor of the *Eatanswill Gazette*, had taken a seat near the fire in the coffee-room of the Saracen's Head, Worcester. "Is the *Independent* still in being?"

"The *Independent*, sir," replied Pott, "is still dragging on a wretched and lingering career. Abhorred and despised by even the few who are cognisant of its miserable and disgraceful existence; stifled by the very filth it so profusely scatters; rendered deaf and blind by the exhalations of its own slime; the obscene journal, happily unconscious of its degraded state, is rapidly sinking beneath that treacherous mud which, while it seems to give it a firm standing with the low and debased classes of society, is nevertheless rising above its detested head, and will speedily engulf it for ever."

Having delivered this manifesto (which formed a portion of his last week's leader) with vehement articulation, the editor paused to take breath, and looked majestically at Bob Sawyer.

"You are a young man, sir?" said Pott.

Mr. Bob Sawyer nodded.

"So are you, sir," said Pott, addressing Mr. Ben Allen.

Ben admitted the soft impeachment.

"And are both deeply imbued with those blue principles which, so long as I live, I have pledged myself to the people of these kingdoms to support and to maintain?" suggested Pott.

"Why, I don't exactly know about that," replied Bob Sawyer.

"I am——"

"Not buff, Mr. Pickwick," interrupted Pott, drawing back his chair, "your friend is not buff, sir?"

No, no," rejoined Bob, "I'm a kind of plaid at present; a compound of all sorts of colours."

"A waverer," said Pott, solemnly, "a waverer. I should like to show you a series of eight articles, sir, that have appeared in the *Eatanswill Gazette*. I think I may venture to say that you would

not be long in establishing your opinions on a firm and solid blue basis, sir."

"I dare say I should turn very blue, long before I got to the end of them," responded Bob.

Mr. Pott looked dubiously at Bob Sawyer for some seconds, and, turning to Mr. Pickwick, said:

"You have seen the literary articles which have appeared at intervals in the *Eatanswill Gazette* in the course of the last three months, and which have excited such general—I may say such universal—attention and admiration?"

"Why," replied Mr. Pickwick, slightly embarrassed by the question, "the fact is, I have been so much engaged in other ways, that I really have not had an opportunity of perusing them."

"You should do so, sir."

"I will."

"They appeared in the form of a copious review of a work on Chinese metaphysics, sir."

"Oh, from your pen, I hope?"

"From the pen of my critic, sir."

"An abstruse subject, I should conceive."

"Very, sir. He *crammed* for it, to use a technical but expressive term; he read up for the subject, at my desire, in the 'Encyclopædia Britannica.'"

"Indeed! I was not aware that that valuable work contained any information respecting Chinese metaphysics."

"He read, sir," rejoined Pott, "he read for metaphysics under the letter M, and for China under the letter C, and combined his information, sir!"

"Is it fair to inquire what great object has brought you so far from home?"

"That object which actuates and animates me in all my gigantic labours, sir—my country's good."

"I suppose it was some public mission."

"Yes, sir, it is. A buff ball and supper, sir, will take place in Birmingham to-morrow evening."

"You don't say so!"

Pott nodded portentously.

Now, although Mr. Pickwick feigned to stand aghast at this disclosure, he was so little versed in local politics that he was unable to form an adequate comprehension of the importance of

the dire conspiracy it referred to; observing which, Mr. Pott, drawing forth the last number of the *Eatanswill Gazette*, and referring to the same, delivered himself of the following paragraph:

“HOLE-AND-CORNER BUFFERY.

“A reptile contemporary has recently sweltered forth his black venom in the vain and hopeless attempt of sullyng the fair name of our distinguished and excellent representative, the Honourable Mr. Slumkey—that Slumkey whom we, long before he gained his present noble and exalted position, predicted would one day be, as he now is, at once his country’s brightest honour, and her proudest boast; alike her bold defender and her honest pride—our reptile contemporary, we say, has made himself merry, at the expense of a superbly embossed plated coal-scuttle, which has been presented to that glorious man by his enraptured constituents, and towards the purchase of which, the nameless wretch insinuates, the Honourable Mr. Slumkey himself contributed, through a confidential friend of his butler’s, more than three-fourths of the whole sum subscribed. Why, does not the crawling creature see, that even if this be the fact, the Honourable Mr. Slumkey only appears in a still more amiable and radiant light than before, if that be possible? Does not even *his* obtuseness perceive that this amiable and touching desire to carry out the wishes of the constituent body, must for ever endear him to the hearts and souls of such of his fellow-townsmen as are not worse than swine; or, in other words, who are not as debased as our contemporary himself? But such is the wretched trickery of hole-and-corner Buffery? These are not its only artifices. Treason is abroad. We boldly state, now that we are goaded to the disclosure, and we throw ourselves on the country and its constables for protection—we boldly state that secret preparations are at this moment in progress for a Buff ball: which is to be held in a Buff town, in the very heart and centre of a Buff population; which is to be conducted by a Buff master of the ceremonies; which is to be attended by four ultra Buff members of Parliament, and the admission to which is to be by Buff tickets! Does our fiendish contemporary wince? Let him writhe, in impotent malice, as we pen the words, **WE WILL BE THERE.**”

“There, sir,” said Pott, folding up the paper quite exhausted, “that is the state of the case?”

The landlord and waiter entering at the moment with dinner, caused Mr. Pott to lay his finger on his lips, in token that he considered his life in Mr. Pickwick's hands and depended on his secrecy.

During dinner, a stage-coach stopped at the Inn door, and a gentleman was shown into the room originally assigned to the patriotic Mr. Pott, and the waiter remarked in dumb astonishment at the singular coincidence, that he had no sooner lighted the candles than the gentleman, diving into his hat, drew forth a newspaper, and began to read it with the very same expression of indignant scorn which, upon the majestic features of Pott, had paralysed his energies an hour before. The man observed, too, that whereas Mr. Pott's scorn had been roused by a newspaper headed the *Eatanswill Independent*, this gentleman's withering contempt was awakened by a newspaper entitled the *Eatanswill Gazette*.

"Send the landlord," said the stranger.

"Yes, sir," rejoined the waiter.

The landlord was sent for, and came.

"Are you the landlord?" inquired the gentleman.

"I am, sir."

"Do you know me?"

"I have not the pleasure, sir," rejoined the landlord.

"My name is Slurk. Do you know me now, man?"

The landlord made a strong effort, and at length replied:

"Well, sir, I do *not* know you."

The stranger, dashing his clenched fist upon the table, said: "And this is popularity. This is gratitude for years of labour and study in behalf of the masses. I alight wet and weary; no enthusiastic crowds press forward to greet their champion; the church bells are silent; the very name elicits no responsive feeling in their torpid bosoms. It is enough to curdle the ink in one's pen, and induce one to abandon their cause for ever."

"Did you say brandy and water, sir," said the landlord, venturing a hint.

"Rum," said Mr. Slurk, turning fiercely upon him. "Have you got a fire anywhere? Is there anybody in the kitchen?"

Not a soul. There was a beautiful fire. Everybody had gone, and the house door was closed for the night.

"I will drink my rum and water," said Mr. Slurk, "by the kitchen fire," and away he went.

"I say, we've let the fire out. It's uncommonly cold after the rain, isn't it?" said Mr. Bob Sawyer, whose dinner was concluded.

"It really is," replied Mr. Pickwick, shivering.

"It wouldn't be a bad notion to have a cigar by the kitchen fire, would it?"

"It would be particularly comfortable, *I* think. Mr. Pott, what do you say?"

Mr. Pott yielded a ready assent; and all four travellers, each with his glass in his hand, at once betook themselves to the kitchen, with Sam Weller heading the procession to show them the way.

The stranger was still reading; he looked up and started. Mr. Pott started.

"What's the matter?" whispered Mr. Pickwick.

"That reptile!" replied Pott.

"What reptile?" said Mr. Pickwick, looking about him for fear he should tread on some overgrown black beetle, or dropsical spider.

"That reptile," whispered Pott, catching Mr. Pickwick by the arm, and pointing towards the stranger. "That reptile Slurk of the *Independent*!"

"Perhaps we had better retire," whispered Mr. Pickwick.

"Never, sir," rejoined Pott, pot-valiant in a double sense, "never." With these words, Mr. Pott took up his position on an opposite settle, and selecting one from a little bundle of newspapers, began to read against his enemy.

Mr. Pott, of course, read the *Independent*, and Mr. Slurk, of course, read the *Gazette*; and each gentleman audibly expressed his contempt of the other's compositions by bitter laughs and sarcastic sniffs; whence they proceeded to more open expressions of opinion, such as "absurd," "wretched," "atrocious," "humbug," "knavery," "dirt," "filth," "slime," "ditch-water," and other critical remarks of the like nature.

Both Mr. Bob Sawyer and Mr. Ben Allen had beheld these symptoms of rivalry and hatred with delight. The moment they began to flag, the mischievous Mr. Bob Sawyer, addressing Slurk with great politeness, said:

"Will you allow me to look at your paper, sir, when you have quite done with it?"

"You will find very little to repay you for your trouble in this

contemptible *thing*, sir," replied Slurk, bestowing a Satanic frown on Pott.

"You shall have this presently," said Pott, looking up, pale with rage, and quivering in his speech, from the same cause. "Ha! ha! you will be amused with this *fellow's* audacity.

Terrific emphasis was laid upon this "thing" and "fellow;" and the faces of both editors began to glow with defiance.

"The ribaldry of this miserable man is despicably disgusting," said Pott, pretending to address Bob Sawyer, and scowling upon Slurk.

Here Mr. Slurk laughed very heartily, and folding up the paper so as to get at a fresh column conveniently, said that the blockhead really amused him.

"What an impudent blunderer this fellow is," said Pott, turning from pink to crimson.

"Did you ever read any of this man's foolery, sir?" inquired Slurk of Bob Sawyer.

"Never," replied Bob; "is it very bad?"

"Oh, shocking! shocking!" rejoined Slurk.

"Really! Dear me, this is too atrocious!" exclaimed Pott, at this juncture; still feigning to be absorbed in his reading.

"If you can wade through a few sentences of malice, meanness, falsehood, perjury, treachery, and cant," said Slurk, handing the paper to Bob, "you will, perhaps, be somewhat repaid by a laugh at the style of this ungrammatical twaddler."

"What's that you said, sir?" inquired Mr. Pott, looking up, trembling all over with passion.

"What's that to you, sir?" replied Slurk.

"Ungrammatical twaddler, was it, sir?" said Pott.

"Yes, sir, it was," replied Slurk, "and *blue bore*, sir, if you like that better; ha! ha!"

Mr. Pott retorted not a word to this jocose insult, but deliberately folded up his copy of the *Independent*, flattened it carefully down, crushed it beneath his boot, spat upon it with great ceremony, and flung it into the fire.

"There, sir," said Pott, retreating from the stove. "and that's the way I would serve the viper who produces it, if I were not, fortunately for him, restrained by the laws of my country."

"Serve him so, sir!" cried Slurk, starting up. "Those laws shall never be appealed to by him, sir, in such a case. Serve him so, sir!"

"Hear! hear!" said Bob Sawyer.

"Nothing can be fairer," observed Mr. Ben Allen.

"Serve him so, sir!" reiterated Slurk, in a loud voice.

Mr. Pott darted a look of contempt, which might have withered an anchor.

"Serve him so, sir!" reiterated Slurk, in a louder voice than before.

"I will not, sir," rejoined Pott.

"Oh, you won't, won't you, sir?" said Mr. Slurk, in a taunting manner; "you hear this, gentlemen! He won't; not that he's afraid; oh, no! he *won't*. Ha! ha!"

"I consider you, sir," said Mr. Pott, moved by this sarcasm, "I consider you a viper. I look upon you, sir, as a man who has placed himself beyond the pale of society, by his most audacious, disgraceful, and abominable public conduct. I view you, sir, personally and politically, in no other light than as a most unparalleled and unmitigated viper."

The indignant *Independent* did not wait to hear the end of this personal denunciation; for, catching up his carpet-bag, which was well stuffed with movables, he swung it in the air as Pott turned away, and, letting it fall with a circular sweep on his head, just as that particular angle of the bag where a good thick hair-brush happened to be packed, caused a sharp crash to be heard throughout the kitchen, and brought him at once to the ground.

"Gentlemen," cried Mr. Pickwick, as Pott started up and seized the fire-shovel, "Gentlemen! Consider—help—Sam—here—pray, gentlemen—interfere, somebody."

Uttering these incoherent exclamations, Mr. Pickwick rushed between the infuriated combatants just in time to receive the carpet-bag on one side of his body, and the fire-shovel on the other. Whether the representatives of the public feeling of Eatanswill were blinded by animosity, or (being both acute reasoners) saw the advantage of having a third party between them to bear all the blows, certain it is that they paid not the slightest attention to Mr. Pickwick, but defying each other with great spirit, plied the carpet-bag and fire-shovel most fearlessly. Mr. Pickwick would unquestionably have suffered severely for his humane interference, if Mr. Weller, attracted by his master's cries, had not rushed in at the moment, and snatching up a meal-sack, effectually stopped the conflict by drawing it over the head and

shoulders of the mighty Pott, and claspings him tight round the shoulders.

"Take away that 'ere bag from the t'other madman," said Sam to Ben Allen and Bob Sawyer, who had done nothing but dodge round the group, each with a tortoise-shell lancet in his hand, ready to bleed the first man stunned. "Give it up, you wretched little creetur, or I'll smother you in it."

Awed by these threats, and quite out of breath, the *Independent* suffered himself to be disarmed; and Mr. Weller, removing the extinguisher from Pott, set him free with a caution.

"You take yourselves off to bed quietly," said Sam, "or I'll put you both in it, and let you fight it out with the mouth tied, as I would a dozen sich, if they played these games. And you have the goodness to come this here vay, sir, if you please."

Thus addressing his master, Sam took him by the arm, and led him off, while the rival editors were severally removed to their respective beds.

THE DRUNKARD'S DEATH.

(*Condensed.*)

THERE is scarcely a man in the constant habit of walking, day after day, through any of the crowded thoroughfares of London, who cannot recollect among the people whom he "knows by sight," to use a familiar phrase, some being of abject and wretched appearance whom he remembers to have seen in a very different condition, whom he has observed sinking lower and lower, by almost imperceptible degrees, and the shabbiness and utter destitution of whose appearance, at last, strike forcibly and painfully upon him as he passes by. Alas! such a case is of too frequent occurrence to be rare in any man's experience; and but too often arises from one cause—drunkenness—that fierce rage for the slow, sure poison that oversteps every other consideration; that casts aside wife, children, friends, happiness and station; and hurries its victims madly on to degradation and death!

Some of these men have been impelled, by misfortune and misery, to the vice that has degraded them. The ruin of worldly expectations, the death of those they loved, the sorrow that slowly consumes, but will not break the heart, has driven them wild; and

they present the hideous spectacle of madmen, slowly dying by their own hands. But by far the greater part have wilfully, and with open eyes, plunged into the gulf from which the man who once enters it never rises more, but into which he sinks deeper and deeper down, until recovery is hopeless.

Such a man as this once stood by the bedside of his dying wife, while his children knelt around, and mingled low bursts of grief with their innocent prayers. The room was scantily and meanly furnished; and it needed but a glance at the pale form from which the light of life was fast passing away, to know that grief, and want, and anxious care had been busy at the heart for many a weary year. An elderly female, with her face bathed in tears, was supporting the head of the dying woman—her daughter—on her arm. When at last the mother's grasp relaxed, and, turning one look from the children to their father, she vainly strove to speak, and fell backward on the pillow, all was so calm and tranquil that she seemed to sink to sleep. Her heart was broken, and she was dead!

The husband sunk into a chair by the bedside, and clasped his hands upon his burning forehead. He gazed from child to child, but, when a weeping eye met his, he quailed beneath its look. No word of comfort was whispered in his ear, no look of kindness lighted on his face. All shrunk from and avoided him. His wife alone had clung to him in good and evil, in sickness and poverty; and how had he rewarded her? He had reeled from the tavern to her bedside in time to see her die.

Time went on; the four children who were left to him grew up, and were children no longer. The father remained the same—poorer, shabbier, and more dissolute-looking, but the same confirmed and irreclaimable drunkard. The boys had, long ago, run wild in the streets, and left him; the girl alone remained, but she worked hard, and words or blows could always procure him something for the tavern.

One night, as early as ten o'clock—for the girl had been sick for many days, and there was, consequently, little to spend at the public-house—he bent his steps homewards. He was within a step or two of his room-door when it opened, and a girl, whose miserable and emaciated appearance was only to be equalled by that of the candle which she shaded with her hand, peeped anxiously out.

"Is that you, father?" said the girl.

"Who else should it be?" replied the man gruffly. "What are you trembling at? It's little enough that I've had to drink to-day, for there's no drink without money, and no money without work. What's the matter with the girl?"

"I am not well, father—not at all well," said the girl, bursting into tears.

"Ah!" replied the man. "You must get better somehow, for we must have money. You must go to the parish doctor and make him give you some medicine. They're paid for it. What are you standing before the door for? Let me come in, can't you?"

"Father," whispered the girl, shutting the door behind her, and placing herself before it, "William has come back."

"Who?" said the man with a start.

"Hush!" replied the girl, "William; brother William."

"And what does he want?" said the man with an effort at composure—"money? meat? drink? He's come to the wrong shop for that, if he does. Give me the candle—give me the candle, fool—I ain't going to hurt him."

Sitting on an old box, with his head resting on his hand, and his eyes fixed on a wretched cinder fire that was smouldering on the hearth, was a young man of about two-and-twenty, miserably clad in an old coarse jacket and trousers. He started up when his father entered.

"Fasten the door, Mary," said the young man hastily. "Fasten the door. You look as if you didn't know me, father. It's long enough since you drove me from home; you may well forget me."

"And what do you want here now?"

"Shelter. I'm in trouble; that's enough. If I'm caught I shall swing; that's certain. Caught I shall be, unless I stop here; that's *as* certain. And there's an end of it."

"You mean to say you've been robbing, or murdering, then?"

"Yes, I do. Does it surprise you, father?"

"Where's your brothers?" he said after a long pause.

"Where they'll never trouble you; John's gone to America, and Henry's dead."

"Dead!" said the father with a shudder, which even he could not repress.

"Dead. He died in my arms—shot like a dog by a gamekeeper. He staggered back, I caught him, and his blood trickled down my

hands. It poured out from his side like water. He was weak, and it blinded him, but he threw himself down on his knees on the grass, and prayed to God that, if his mother was in heaven, He would hear her prayers for pardon for her youngest son. 'I was her favourite boy, Will,' he said, 'and I am glad to think, now, that when she was dying, though I was a very young child then, and my little heart was almost bursting, I knelt down at the foot of the bed, and thanked God for having made me so fond of her as to have never once done anything to bring the tears into her eyes. Oh, Will, why was she taken away, and father left?' There's his dying words, father; make the best you can of 'em. You struck him across the face, in a drunken fit, the morning we ran away; and here's the end of it!"

The girl wept aloud; and the father, sinking his head upon his knees, rocked himself to and fro.

"If I am taken," said the young man, "I shall be carried back into the country, and hung for that man's murder. They cannot trace me here without your assistance, father. For aught I know, you may give me up to justice; but, unless you do, here I stop, until I can venture to escape abroad."

For two whole days all three remained in the wretched room without stirring out. On the third evening, however, the girl was worse than she had been yet, and the few scraps of food they had were gone. It was indispensably necessary that somebody should go out; and, as the girl was too weak and ill, the father went just at nightfall. He got some medicine for the girl, and a trifle in the way of pecuniary assistance. On his way back he earned sixpence by holding a horse; and he turned homewards with enough money to supply their most pressing wants for two or three days to come. He had to pass the public-house. He lingered for an instant, walked past it, turned back again, lingered once more, and finally slunk in. Two men whom he had not observed were on the watch. They were on the point of giving up their search in despair, when his loitering attracted their attention; and, when he entered the public-house, they followed him.

"You'll drink with me, master," said one of them, proffering him a glass of liquor.

"And me too," said the other, replenishing the glass as soon as it was drained of its contents.

The man thought of his hungry children and his son's danger.

But they were nothing to the drunkard. He *did* drink ; and his reason left him.

"A wet night, Warden," whispered one of the men in his ear, as he at length turned to go away, after spending in liquor one-half of the money on which, perhaps, his daughter's life depended.

"The right sort of night for our friends in hiding, Master Warden," whispered the other.

"Sit down here," said the one who had spoken first, drawing him into a corner. "We have been looking arter the young 'un. We came to tell him it's all right now, but we couldn't find him, 'cause we hadn't got the precise direction. But that ain't strange, for I don't think he knowed it himself when he come to London, did he?"

"No, he didn't," replied the father.

The two men exchanged glances.

"There's a vessel down at the docks to sail at midnight, when it's high water," resumed the first speaker, "and we'll put him on board. His passage is taken in another name, and, what's better than that, it's paid for. It's lucky we met you."

"Very," said the second.

"Capital luck," said the first, with a wink to his companion.

"Great," replied the second, with a slight nod of intelligence.

"Another glass here ; quick !" said the first speaker. And, in five minutes more, the father had unconsciously yielded up his own son into the hangman's hands.

Slowly and heavily the time dragged along, as the brother and sister, in their miserable hiding-place, listened in anxious suspense to the slightest sound. At length a heavy footstep was heard upon the stair ; it approached nearer ; it reached the landing ; and the father staggered into the room. The girl saw that he was intoxicated, and advanced with a candle in her hand to meet him ; she stopped short, gave a loud scream, and fell senseless on the ground. She had caught sight of the shadow of a man reflected on the floor. They both rushed in, and in another instant the young man was a prisoner and handcuffed.

"Very quietly done," said one of the men to his companion, "thanks to the old man. Lift up the girl, Tom. Come, come, it's no use crying, young woman. It's all over now, and can't be helped."

"Listen to me, father," said the young man in a tone that made

the drunkard's flesh creep. "My brother's blood, and mine is on your head: I never had kind look, or word, or care, from you, and alive or dead, I will never forgive you. Die when you will, or how, I will be with you. I speak as a dead man now, and I warn you, father, that as surely as you must one day stand before your Maker, so surely shall your children be there, hand-in-hand, to cry for judgment against you!"

When the dim and misty light of a winter's morning penetrated into the narrow court, Warden awoke from his heavy sleep, and found himself alone.

For many days he occupied himself in searching for his daughter, but no trace of her did he meet with, and no word of her reached his ears. At length he gave up the pursuit as hopeless.

At last, one bitter night, he sunk down on a door-step faint and ill. The premature decay of vice and profligacy had worn him to the bone.

And now the long-forgotten scenes of a misspent life crowded thick and fast upon him. He thought of the time when he had a home—a happy, cheerful home—and of those who peopled it, and flocked about him then, until the forms of his elder children seemed to rise from the grave, and stand about him—so plain, so clear, and so distinct they were, that he could touch and feel them. Looks that he had long forgotten were fixed upon him once more; voices long hushed in death sounded in his ears like the music of village bells. But it was only for an instant. The rain beat heavily upon him; and cold and hunger were gnawing at his heart again.

He rose, and dragged his feeble limbs a few paces further. The street was silent and empty.

Suddenly he started up in the extremity of terror. He had heard his own voice shouting in the night air, he knew not what, or why. Hark! A groan! another! His senses were leaving him; half-formed and incoherent words burst from his lips; and his hands sought to tear and lacerate his flesh. He was going mad, and shrieked for help till his voice failed him.

In an instant his resolve was taken, his limbs received new life; he ran quickly from the spot, and paused not for breath until he reached the riverside.

He crept softly down the steep stone stairs that lead from the commencement of Waterloo Bridge down to the water's level.

The tide was in, and the water flowed at his feet. Strange and fantastic forms rose to the surface, and beckoned him to approach; dark gleaming eyes peered from the water, and seemed to mock his hesitation, while hollow murmurs from behind urged him onwards. He retreated a few paces, took a short run, desperate leap, and plunged into the river.

Not five seconds had passed when he rose to the water's surface—but what a change had taken place in that short time in all his thoughts and feelings! Life—life in any form—poverty, misery, starvation—anything but death. He fought and struggled with the water that closed over his head, and screamed in agonies of terror. The curse of his own son rang in his ears. The shore—but one foot of dry ground—he could almost touch the step. One hand's breadth nearer, and he was saved—but the tide bore him onward under the dark arches of the bridge, and he sank to the bottom.

Again he rose and struggled for life. For one instant—for one brief instant—the buildings on the river's banks, the lights on the bridge through which the current had borne him, the black water, and the fast-flying clouds were distinctly visible—once more he sunk, and once again he rose. Bright flames of fire shot up from earth to heaven, and reeled before his eyes, while the water thundered in his ears, and stunned him with its furious roar.

A week afterwards the body was washed ashore, some miles down the river, a swollen and disfigured mass. Unrecognised and unpitied, it was borne to the grave! and there it has long since mouldered away.

MRS. JOSEPH PORTER.

(Condensed.)

Most extensive were the preparations at Rose Villa, Clapham Rise, in the occupation of Mr. Gattleton, and great was the anxiety of Mr. Gattleton's interesting family, as the day fixed for the representation of the Private Play "*Othello*," which had been "many months in preparation," approached.

"When we're a *teetle* more perfect, I think it will go admirably," said Mr. Sempronius, addressing his *corps dramatique*, at the conclusion of the hundred and fiftieth rehearsal. In consideration of

his sustaining the trifling inconvenience of bearing all the expenses of the play, Mr. Sempronius had been, in the most handsome manner, unanimously elected Stage Manager. "Evans," continued he, "Evans, you play *Roderigo* beautifully."

"Beautifully!" echoed the three Miss Gattletons; for Mr. Evans was pronounced by all his lady friends to be "quite a dear." *Roderigo* simpered and bowed.

"But I think," added the manager, "you are hardly perfect in the—fall—in the fencing scene, where you are—you understand?"

"It's very difficult," said Mr. Evans thoughtfully; "I've fallen about a good deal in our counting-house lately, for practice, only I find it hurts one so. Being obliged to fall backwards, you see, it bruises one's head a good deal."

"But you must take care you don't knock a wing down," said Mr. Gattleton the elder, who had been appointed prompter, and who took as much interest in the play as the youngest of the company. "The stage is very narrow, you know."

"Oh! don't be afraid," said Mr. Evans with a very self-satisfied air: "I shall fall with my head 'off,' and then I can't do any harm."

"But," said the manager, rubbing his hands, "we shall make a decided hit in *Masaniello*. Harleigh sings that music admirably."

Everybody echoed the sentiment. Mr. Harleigh smiled, and looked foolish—not an unusual thing with him—hummed "Behold how brightly breaks the morning," and blushed as red as the fisherman's nightcap he was trying on.

"Let's see," resumed the manager, telling the number on his fingers; "we shall have three dancing female peasants, besides *Fenella*, and four fishermen. Then there's our man Tom; he can have a pair of ducks of mine, and a checked shirt of Bob's, and a red nightcap, and he'll do for another—that's five. In the choruses, of course, we can sing at the sides; and in the market scene we can walk about in cloaks and things. When the revolt takes place, Tom must keep rushing in on one side and out on the other, with a pickaxe, as fast as he can. The effect will be electrical; it will look exactly as if there was an immense number of 'em. And in the eruption scene we must burn the red fire, and upset the tea-trays, and make all sorts of noises—and it's sure to do."

"Sure! sure!" cried all the performers *unâ voce*—and away hurried Mr. Sempronius Gattleton to wash the burnt cork off his

face, and superintend the "setting up" of some of the amateur-painted, and never-sufficiently-to-be-admired, scenery.

Mrs. Gattleton was a kind, good-tempered, vulgar soul, exceedingly fond of her husband and children, and entertaining only three dislikes. In the first place, she had a natural antipathy to anybody else's unmarried daughters; in the second, she was in bodily fear of anything in the shape of ridicule; lastly—almost a necessary consequence of this feeling—she regarded with feelings of the utmost horror one Mrs. Joseph Porter over the way. However, the good folks of Clapham and its vicinity stood very much in awe of scandal and sarcasm; and thus Mrs. Joseph Porter was courted, flattered, caressed, and invited. She now came in to the Gattletons.

"Well, my dear Mrs. Gattleton," said Mrs. Joseph Porter after they had been closeted for some time, and when, by dint of indefatigable pumping, she had managed to extract all the news about the play, "well, my dear, people may say what they please; indeed, we know they will, for some folks are so ill-natured. Ah, my dear Miss Lucina, how d'ye do? I was just telling your mamma that I have heard it said that——"

"What?"

"Mrs. Porter is alluding to the play, my dear," said Mrs. Gattleton; "she was, I am sorry to say, just informing me that——"

"Oh, now, pray don't mention it!" interrupted Mrs. Porter: "it's most absurd—quite as absurd as young What's-his-name saying he wondered how Miss Caroline, with such a foot and ankle, could have the vanity to play *Fenella*."

"Highly impertinent, whoever said it," said Mrs. Gattleton, bristling up.

"Certainly, my dear," chimed in the delighted Mrs. Porter; "most undoubtedly! Because, as I said, if Miss Caroline *does* play *Fenella*, it doesn't follow, as a matter of course, that she should think she has a pretty foot; and then—such puppies as these young men are—he had the impudence to say that——"

How far the amiable Mrs. Porter might have succeeded in her pleasant purpose, it is impossible to say, had not the entrance of Mr. Thomas Balderstone, Mrs. Gattleton's brother, familiarly called in the family "Uncle Tom," changed the course of conversation, and suggested to her mind an excellent plan of operation on the evening of the play.

Uncle Tom was very rich, and exceedingly fond of his nephews and nieces: as a matter of course, therefore, he was an object of great importance in his own family. He was one of the best-hearted men in existence; always in a good temper, and always talking. It was his pride that he remembered all the principal plays of Shakspeare from beginning to end—and so he did. The result of this parrot-like accomplishment was, that he was not only perpetually quoting himself, but that he could never sit by and hear a misquotation from the “Swan of Avon” without setting the unfortunate delinquent right.

“Well, girls!” said Uncle Tom after the preparatory ceremony of kissing and how-d’ye-doing had been gone through—“how d’ye get on? Know your parts, eh?—Lucina, my dear, act ii., scene 1—place, left—cue—‘Unknown fate’—What’s next, eh?—Go on—‘The heavens——’”

“Oh yes!” said Miss Lucina, “I recollect:

‘The heavens forbid
But that our loves and comforts should increase
Even as our days do grow!’”

“Make a pause here and there,” said the old gentleman, who was a great critic. “‘But that our loves and comforts should increase’—emphasis on the last syllable, ‘crease,’—loud ‘even,’ one, two, three, four; then loud again, ‘as our days do grow;’ emphasis on *days*. That’s the way, my dear; trust to your uncle for emphasis. Ah! Sem, my boy, how are you?”

“Very well, thankee, uncle,” returned Mr. Sempronius, who had just appeared, looking something like a ring-dove, with a small circle round each eye: the result of his constant corking for *Othello*. “Of course we see you on Thursday.”

“Of course, of course, my dear boy.”

“What a pity it is your nephew didn’t think of making you prompter, Mr. Balderstone!” whispered Mrs. Joseph Porter; “you would have been invaluable.”

“Well, I flatter myself I *should* have been tolerably up to the thing,” responded Uncle Tom.

“I must bespeak sitting next you on the night,” resumed Mrs. Porter; “and then, if our dear young friends here should be at all wrong, you will be able to enlighten me. I shall be so interested.”

"I am sure I shall be most happy to give you any assistance in my power."

"Mind, it's a bargain."

"Certainly."

"I don't know how it is," said Mrs. Gattleton to her daughters as they were sitting round the fire in the evening, looking over their parts, "but I really very much wish Mrs. Joseph Porter wasn't coming on Thursday. I am sure she's scheming something."

"She can't make *us* ridiculous, however," observed Mr. Sempronius Gattleton haughtily.

The long-looked-for Thursday arrived in due course, and brought with it, as Mr. Gattleton, senior, philosophically observed, "no disappointments to speak of." True, it was yet a matter of doubt whether *Cassio* would be enabled to get into the dress which had been sent for him from the masquerade warehouse. It was equally uncertain whether the principal female singer would be sufficiently recovered from the influenza to make her appearance; Mr. Harleigh, the *Masaniello* of the night, was hoarse, and rather unwell, in consequence of the great quantity of lemon and sugar-candy he had eaten to improve his voice; and two flutes and a violoncello had pleaded severe colds. What of that? the audience were all coming. Everybody knew his part; the dresses were covered with tinsel and spangles; the white plumes looked beautiful; Mr. Evans had practised falling until he was bruised from head to foot, and quite perfect; *Iago* was sure that in the stabbing scene he should make "a decided hit." A self-taught deaf gentleman, who had kindly offered to bring his flute, would be a most valuable addition to the orchestra; Miss Jenkins's talent for the piano was too well known to be doubted for an instant; Mr. Cape had practised the violin accompaniment with her frequently; and Mr. Brown, who had kindly undertaken, at a few hours' notice, to bring his violoncello, would, no doubt, manage extremely well.

Seven o'clock came, and so did the audience. Mrs. Joseph Porter and Uncle Tom were seated in the centre of the third row from the stage; Mrs. P. amusing Uncle Tom with all sorts of stories, and Uncle Tom amusing every one else by laughing most immoderately.

Ting, ting, ting! went the prompter's bell at eight o'clock precisely, and dash went the orchestra into the overture to *The Men of Prometheus*. The pianoforte player hammered away with

laudable perseverance; and the violoncello, which struck in at intervals, "sounded very well, considering." The unfortunate individual, however, who had undertaken to play the flute accompaniment "at sight," found, from fatal experience, the perfect truth of the old adage, "Out of sight, out of mind;" for, being very near-sighted, and being placed at a considerable distance from his music-book, all he had an opportunity of doing was to play a bar now and then in the wrong place, and put the other performers out. It is, however, but justice to Mr. Brown to say that he did this to admiration. The overture, in fact, was not unlike a race between the different instruments; the piano came in first by several bars, and the violoncello next, quite distancing the poor flute; for the deaf gentleman *too-too'd* away, quite unconscious that he was at all wrong, until apprised, by the applause of the audience, that the overture was concluded. A considerable bustling and shuffling of feet was then heard upon the stage, accompanied by whispers of "Here's a pretty go!—what's to be done?" &c. The audience applauded again, by way of raising the spirits of the performers; and then Mr. Sempronius desired the prompter, in a very audible voice, to "clear the stage, and ring up."

Ting, ting, ting! went the bell again. Everybody sat down; the curtain shook; rose sufficiently high to display several pair of yellow boots paddling about; and there remained.

Ting, ting, ting! went the bell again. The curtain was violently convulsed, but rose no higher; the audience tittered; Mrs. Porter looked at Uncle Tom; Uncle Tom looked at everybody, rubbing his hands and laughing with perfect rapture. After as much ringing with the little bell as a muffin boy would make in going down a tolerably long street, and a vast deal of whispering, hammering, and calling for nails and cords, the curtain at length rose, and discovered Mr. Sempronius Gattleton *solus*, and decked for *Othello*. After three distinct rounds of applause, during which Mr. Sempronius applied his right hand to his left breast, and bowed in the most approved manner, the manager advanced, and said:

"Ladies and Gentlemen—I assure you it is with sincere regret, that I regret to be compelled to inform you, that *Iago* who was to have played Mr. Wilson—I beg your pardon, Ladies and Gentlemen, but I am naturally somewhat agitated (applause)—I mean, Mr. Wilson, who was to have played *Iago*, is—that is, has been—or, in

other words, Ladies and Gentlemen, the fact is, that I have just received a note, in which I am informed that *Iago* is unavoidably detained at the Post Office this evening. Under these circumstances, I trust—a—a—amateur performance—a—another gentleman undertaken to read the part—requests indulgence for a short time—courtesy and kindness of a British audience.” Overwhelming applause. Exit Mr. Sempronius Gattleton, and curtain falls.

At last, the tragedy began in real earnest. It went off well enough until the third scene of the first act, in which *Othello* addresses the Senate; the only remarkable circumstance being that, as *Iago* could not get on any of the stage boots, in consequence of his feet being violently swollen with the heat and excitement, he was under the necessity of playing the part in a pair of Wellingtons, which contrasted rather oddly with his richly-embroidered pantaloons. When *Othello* started with his address to the Senate (whose dignity was represented by, the *Duke*, a carpenter, two men engaged on the recommendation of the gardener, and a boy), Mrs. Porter found the opportunity she so anxiously sought.

Mr. Sempronius proceeded :

“ ‘ Most potent, grave, and reverend signiors,
My very noble and approv’d good masters,
That I have ta’en away this old man’s daughter
It is most true ;—rude am I in my speech——’ ”

“ Is that right ? ” whispered Mrs. Porter to Uncle Tom.

“ No.”

“ Tell him so, then.”

“ I will. Sem ! ” called out Uncle Tom, “ that’s wrong, my boy.”

“ What’s wrong, uncle ? ” demanded *Othello*, quite forgetting the dignity of his situation.

“ You’ve left out something. ‘ True I have married——.’ ”

“ Oh—ah ! ” said Mr. Sempronius, endeavouring to hide his confusion as much and as ineffectually as the audience attempted to conceal their half-suppressed tittering, by coughing with extraordinary violence.

——“ ‘ true I have married her ;—
The very head and front of my offending
Hath this extent ; no more.’ ”

(*Aside.*) Why don’t you prompt, father ? ”

"Because I've mislaid my spectacles," said poor Mr. Gattleton, almost dead with the heat and bustle.

"There, now it's 'Rude am I,'" said Uncle Tom.

"Yes, I know it is," returned the unfortunate manager, proceeding with his part.

It would be useless and tiresome to quote the number of instances in which Uncle Tom, now completely in his element, and instigated by the mischievous Mrs. Porter, corrected the mistakes of the performers; suffice it to say that, having mounted his hobby nothing could induce him to dismount; so, during the whole remainder of the play, he performed a kind of running accompaniment, by muttering everybody's part as it was being delivered, in an under-tone. The audience were highly amused, Mrs. Porter delighted, the performers embarrassed; Uncle Tom never was better pleased in all his life; and Uncle Tom's nephews and nieces had never, although the declared heirs to his large property, so heartily wished him gathered to his fathers as on that memorable occasion.

Several other minor causes, too, united to damp the ardour of the *dramatis personæ*. The fishermen in *Masaniello*, who were hired for the occasion, revolted to the very life, positively refusing to play without an increased allowance of spirits; and, their demand being complied with, getting drunk in the eruption scene as naturally as possible. The red fire, which was burnt at the conclusion of the second act, not only nearly suffocated the audience, but nearly set the house on fire into the bargain; and, as it was, the remainder of the piece was acted in a thick fog.

In short, the whole affair was, as Mrs. Joseph Porter triumphantly told everybody, "a complete failure." The audience went home at four o'clock in the morning, exhausted with laughter, suffering from severe headaches, and smelling terribly of brimstone and gunpowder. The Messrs. Gattleton, senior and junior, retired to rest, with the vague idea of emigrating to Swan River early in the ensuing week.

THE DEATH OF LITTLE NELL.

THE heavy door had closed behind him, on his entrance, with a crash that made him start. The figure neither spoke, nor turned to look, nor gave in any way the faintest sign of having heard the noise. The form was that of an old man, his white head akin in colour to the mouldering embers upon which he gazed. He, and the failing light and dying fire, the time-worn room, the solitude, the wasted life, and gloom, were all in fellowship. Ashes, and dust, and ruin!

Kit tried to speak, and did pronounce some words, though what they were he scarcely knew. Still the same terrible low cry went on—still the same rocking in the chair—the same stricken figure was there, unchanged and heedless of his presence.

He had his hand upon the latch, when something in the form—distinctly seen as one log broke and fell, and, as it fell, blazed up—arrested it. He returned to where he had stood before—advanced a pace—another—another still. Another, and he saw the face. Yes! Changed as it was, he knew it well.

“Master!” he cried, stooping on one knee and catching at his hand. “Dear master! Speak to me.”

The old man turned slowly towards him; and muttered in a hollow voice:

“This is another!—How many of these spirits there have been to-night!”

“No spirit, master. No one but your old servant. You know me now, I am sure? Miss Nell—where is she—where is she?”

“They all say that!” cried the old man. “They all ask the same question. A spirit!”

“Where is she?” demanded Kit. “Oh, tell me but that—but that, dear master!”

“She is asleep—yonder—in there.”

“Thank God!”

“Ay! Thank God! I have prayed to Him many, and many, and many a livelong night, when she has been asleep, He knows. Hark! Did she call?”

“I heard no voice.”

"You did. You hear her now. Do you tell me that you don't hear *that*? Nor that?" he cried with a triumphant smile. "Can anybody know that voice so well as I? Hush! Hush!"

Motioning to him to be silent, he stole away into another chamber. After a short absence (during which he could be heard to speak in a softened soothing tone) he returned, bearing in his hand a lamp.

"She is still asleep," he whispered. "You are right. She did not call—unless she did so in her slumber. She has called to me in her sleep before now, sir; as I have sat by watching, I have seen her lips move, and have known, though no sound came from them, that she spoke to me. I feared the light might dazzle her eyes and wake her, so I brought it here. She is sleeping soundly; but no wonder. Angel hands have strewn the ground deep with snow, that the lightest footstep might be lighter yet; and the very birds are dead, that they may not wake her. She used to feed them, sir. Though never so cold and hungry, the timid things would fly from us. They never flew from her!"

Again he stopped to listen, and scarcely drawing breath, listened for a long, long time. That fancy past, he opened an old chest, took out some clothes as fondly as if they had been living things, and began to smooth and brush them with his hand.

"Why dost thou lie so idle there, dear Nell," he murmured, "when there are bright red berries out of doors waiting for thee to pluck them? Why dost thou lie so idle there, when thy little friends come creeping to the door, crying, 'Where is Nell—sweet Nell?'—and sob and weep because they do not see thee? She was always gentle with children. The wildest would do her bidding—she had a tender way with them, indeed she had!"

Kit had no power to speak. His eyes were filled with tears.

"Her little homely dress—her favourite!" cried the old man, pressing it to his breast, and patting it with his shrivelled hand. "She will miss it when she wakes. They have hid it here in sport, but she shall have it—she shall have it. I would not vex my darling for the wide world's riches. See here—these shoes—how worn they are!—she kept them to remind her of our last long journey. You see where the little feet went bare upon the ground. They told me afterwards that the stones had cut and bruised them. *She* never told me that. No, no, God bless her! and, I have remembered since, she walked behind me, sir, that I might not see

how lame she was—but yet she had my hand in hers, and seemed to lead me still.

He pressed them to his lips, and, having carefully put them back again, went on communing with himself—looking wistfully from time to time towards the chamber he had lately visited.

“She was not wont to be a lie-abed; but she was well then. We must have patience. When she is well again, she will rise early as she used to do, and ramble abroad in the healthy morning-time. I often tried to track the way she had gone, but her small footstep left no print upon the dewy ground to guide me.”

Little Nell was dead. There, upon her little bed, she lay at rest. The solemn stillness was no marvel now.

She was dead. No sleep so beautiful and calm, so free from trace of pain, so fair to look upon. She seemed a creature fresh from the hand of God, and waiting for the breath of life; not one who had lived and suffered death.

Her couch was dressed with here and there some winter berries and green leaves, gathered in a spot she had been used to favour. “When I die, put near me something that has loved the light, and had the sky above it always.” Those were her words.

She was dead. Dear, gentle, patient, noble Nell was dead. Her little bird—a poor slight thing the pressure of a finger would have crushed—was stirring nimbly in its cage; and the strong heart of its child-mistress was mute and motionless for ever.

Where were the traces of her early cares, her sufferings, and fatigues? All gone. Sorrow was dead indeed in her, but peace and perfect happiness were born; imaged in her tranquil beauty and profound repose.

And still her former self lay there, unaltered in this change. Yes. The old fireside had smiled upon that same sweet face; it had passed, like a dream, through haunts of misery and care; at the door of the poor schoolmaster on the summer evening, before the furnace fire upon the cold wet night, at the still bedside of the dying boy, there had been the same mild lovely look. So shall we know the angels in their majesty, after death.

The old man held one languid arm in his, and had the small hand tight folded to his breast for warmth. It was the hand she had stretched out to him with her last smile—the hand that had led him on through all their wanderings. Ever and anon he pressed it to his lips; then hugged it to his breast again, murmuring

that it was warmer now; and, as he said it, he looked, in agony, to those who stood around, as if imploring them to help her.

She was dead, and past all help, or need of it. The ancient rooms she had seemed to fill with life, even while her own was waning fast—the garden she had tended—the eyes she had gladdened—the noiseless haunts of many a thoughtful hour—the paths she had trodden as it were but yesterday—could know her never more.

When morning came, and they could speak more calmly on the subject of their grief, they heard how her life had closed.

She had been dead two days. They were all about her at the time, knowing that the end was drawing on. She died soon after daybreak. They had read and talked to her in the earlier portion of the night, but, as the hours crept on, she sunk to sleep. They could tell, by what she faintly uttered in her dreams, that they were of her journeyings with the old man; they were of no painful scenes, but of people who had helped and used them kindly, for she often said "God bless you!" with great fervour. Waking, she never wandered in her mind but once, and that was of beautiful music which she said was in the air. God knows. It may have been.

Opening her eyes at last from a very quiet sleep, she begged that they would kiss her once again. That done, she turned to the old man with a lovely smile upon her face—such, they said, as they had never seen, and never could forget—and clung with both her arms about his neck. They did not know that she was dead at first.

She would like to see poor Kit, she had often said of late. She wished there was somebody to take her love to Kit. And, even then, she never thought or spoke about him but with something of her old clear, merry laugh.

For the rest, she had never murmured or complained; but, with a quiet mind, and manner quite unaltered, save that she every day became more earnest and more grateful to them—faded like the light upon a summer's evening.

The child who had been her little friend came there, almost as soon as it was day, with an offering of dried flowers which he begged them to lay upon her breast. It was he who had come to the window overnight and spoken to the sexton, and they saw in the snow traces of small feet, where he had been lingering near the room in which she lay, before he went to bed. He had a fancy, it seemed, that they had left her there alone; and could not bear the thought.

And now the bell—the bell she had so often heard by night and

day, and listened to with solemn pleasure almost as a living voice—rung its remorseless toll for her, so young, so beautiful, so good. Decrepit age, and vigorous life, and blooming youth, and helpless infancy poured fourth—on crutches, in the pride of strength and health, in the full blush of promise, in the mere dawn of life—to gather round her tomb. Old men were there, whose eyes were dim and senses failing—grandmothers, who might have died ten years ago, and still been old—the deaf, the blind, the lame, the palsied, the living dead in many shapes and forms, to see the closing of that early grave. What was the death it would shut in, to that which still could crawl and creep above it?

Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust! Many a young hand dropped in its little wreath, many a stifled sob was heard. Some—and they were not a few—knelt down. All were sincere and truthful in their sorrow.

Oh! it is hard to take to heart the lesson that such deaths will teach; but let no man reject it, for it is one that all must learn, and is a mighty, universal Truth. When Death strikes down the innocent and young, for every fragile form from which he lets the panting spirit free, a hundred virtues rise, in shapes of mercy, charity, and love, to walk the world, and bless it. Of every tear that sorrowing mortals shed on such green graves, some good is born, some gentler nature comes. In the Destroyer's steps there spring up bright creations that defy his power, and his dark path becomes a way of light to Heaven.

It was late when the old man came home.

He repaired to her chamber straight. Not finding what he had left there, he returned with distracted looks to the room in which they were assembled. From that he rushed into the school-master's cottage, calling her name. They followed close upon him, and, when he had vainly searched it, brought him home.

With such persuasive words as pity and affection could suggest, they prevailed upon him to sit among them and hear what they should tell him. Then, endeavouring by every little artifice to prepare his mind for what must come, and dwelling with many fervent words upon the happy lot to which she had been removed, they told him, at last, the truth. The moment it had passed their lips, he fell down among them like a murdered man.

For many hours they had little hope of his surviving; but grief is strong, and he recovered.

If there be any who have never known the blank that follows death—the weary void—the sense of desolation that will come upon the strongest minds, when something familiar and beloved is missed at every turn—the connexion between inanimate and senseless things, and the object of recollection, when every household god becomes a monument, and every room a grave—if there be any who have not known this, and proved it by their own experience, they can never faintly guess how, for many days, the old man pined and moped away the time, and wandered here and there as seeking something, and had no comfort.

At length, they found, one day, that he had risen early, and, with his knapsack on his back, his staff in his hand, her own straw hat, and little basket full of such things as she had been used to carry, was gone. As they were making ready to pursue him far and wide, a frightened school-boy came who had seen him, but a moment before, sitting in the church—upon her grave, he said.

They hastened there, and, going softly to the door, espied him in the attitude of one who waited patiently. They did not disturb him then, but kept a watch upon him all that day. When it grew quite dark, he rose and returned home, and went to bed, murmuring to himself, “She will come to-morrow!”

Upon the morrow he was there again from sunrise until night; and still at night he laid him down to rest, and murmured, “She will come to-morrow!”

And thenceforth, every day, and all day long, he waited at her grave for her. How many pictures of new journeys over pleasant country, of resting places under the free broad sky, of rambles in the fields and woods, and paths not often trodden—how many tones of that one well-remembered voice—how many glimpses of the form, the fluttering dress, the hair that waved so gaily in the wind—how many visions of what had been, and what he hoped was yet to be—rose up before him, in the old, dull, silent church! He never told them what he thought, or where he went. He would sit with them at night, pondering with a secret satisfaction, they could see, upon the flight that he and she would take before night came again; and still they would hear him whisper in his prayers, “Lord! let her come to-morrow!”

The last time was on a genial day in spring. He did not return at the usual hour, and they went to seek him. He was lying dead upon the stone.

They laid him by the side of her whom he had loved so well; and in the church where they had often prayed, and mused, and lingered hand-in-hand, the child and the old man slept together.

[By kind permission of Messrs. Chapman & Hall]

SENTIMENT.

(Condensed.)

THE Miss Crumptions, or, to quote the authority of the inscription on the garden-gate of Minerva House, Hammersmith, "The Misses Crumpton," were two unusually tall, particularly thin, and exceedingly skinny personages; very upright, and very yellow. Miss Amelia Crumpton owned to thirty-eight, and Miss Maria Crumpton *admitted* she was forty. They dressed in the most interesting manner—like twins; and looked as happy and comfortable as a couple of marigolds run to seed.

Minerva House, conducted under the auspices of the two sisters, was a "finishing establishment for young ladies," where some twenty girls of the ages of from thirteen to nineteen, inclusive, acquired a smattering of everything, and a knowledge of nothing; instruction in French and Italian; dancing lessons twice a week; and other necessities of life.

"Amelia, my dear," said Miss Maria Crumpton, entering the schoolroom one morning, with her false hair in papers; as she occasionally did, in order to impress the young ladies with a conviction of its reality. "Amelia, my dear, here is a most gratifying note I have just received. You needn't mind reading it aloud."

Miss Amelia, thus advised, proceeded to read the following note with an air of great triumph:—

"Cornelius Brook Dingwall, Esq., M.P., presents his compliments to Miss Crumpton, and will feel much obliged by Miss Crumpton's calling on him, if she conveniently can, to-morrow morning at one o'clock, as Cornelius Brook Dingwall, Esq., M.P., is anxious to see Miss Crumpton, on the subject of placing Miss Brook Dingwall under her charge.

"Adelphi,

"Monday morning."

"A Member of Parliament's daughter!" ejaculated Amelia in an ecstatic tone.

"A Member of Parliament's daughter!" repeated Miss Maria with a smile of delight, which, of course, elicited a concurrent titter of pleasure from all the young ladies.

"It's exceedingly delightful!" said Miss Amelia; whereupon all the young ladies murmured their admiration again. Courtiers are but school-boys, and court-ladies school-girls.

So important an announcement superseded the business of the day. A holiday was declared, in commemoration of the great event; and the Miss Crumptions retired to their private apartment to talk it over.

The two Miss Crumptions proceeded to the Adelphi at the appointed time next day.

Cornelius Brook Dingwall, Esq., M.P., was very haughty, solemn, and portentous. He was wonderfully proud of the M.P. attached to his name, and never lost an opportunity of reminding people of his dignity. He was a county magistrate, and discharged the duties of his station with all due justice and impartiality; frequently committing poachers, and occasionally committing himself. Miss Brook Dingwall was one of that numerous class of young ladies, who, like adverbs, may be known by their answering to a commonplace question, and doing nothing else.

On the present occasion this talented individual was seated in a small library at a table; at a little distance from which Mrs. Brook Dingwall was at work. One of those public nuisances, a spoiled child, was playing about the room.

After a little pleasantries from the sweet child, who amused himself by running away with Miss Maria Crumpton's chair as fast as it was placed for her, the visitors were seated, and Cornelius Brook Dingwall, Esq., opened the conversation. He had sent for Miss Crumpton, he said, in consequence of the high character he had received of her establishment from his friend Sir Alfred Muggs.

"One of my principal reasons, Miss Crumpton, for parting with my daughter, is, that she has lately acquired some sentimental ideas, which it is most desirable to eradicate from her young mind." [Here the little innocent before noticed fell out of the arm-chair with an awful crash.]

"Naughty boy!" said his mamma, "I'll ring the bell for James to take him away."

"Pray don't check him, my love," said the M.P. "It all arises from his great flow of spirits."

Silence was restored, and the M.P. resumed: "Now, I know nothing so likely to effect this object, Miss Crumpton, as her mixing constantly in the society of girls of her own age; and, as I know that in your establishment she will meet such as are not likely to contaminate her young mind, I propose to send her to you."

The youngest Miss Crumpton expressed the acknowledgments of the establishment generally. Maria was rendered speechless by bodily pain. The dear little fellow, having recovered his animal spirits, was standing upon her most tender foot, by way of getting his face on a level with the writing-table.

"Of course, Lavinia will be a parlour boarder," continued the enviable father; "and on one point I wish my directions to be strictly observed. The fact is, that some ridiculous love affair, with a person much her inferior in life, has been the cause of her present state of mind. Knowing that of course, under your care, she can have no opportunity of meeting this person, I do not object to—indeed, I should rather prefer—her mixing with such society as you see yourself."

This important statement was again interrupted by the high-spirited little creature, in the excess of his joyousness, breaking a pane of glass, and nearly precipitating himself into an adjacent area. James was rung for; considerable confusion and screaming succeeded; two little blue legs were seen to kick violently in the air as the man left the room, and the child was gone.

"Mr. Brook Dingwall would like Miss Brook Dingwall to learn everything," said Mrs. Brook Dingwall, who hardly ever said anything at all.

"Certainly," said both the Miss Crumptons together.

After a lengthened discussion, it was finally arranged that Miss Lavinia should be forwarded to Hammersmith on the next day but one, on which occasion the half-yearly ball given at the establishment was to take place. It might divert the dear girl's mind.

Miss Lavinia was introduced to her future governess, and both the Miss Crumptons pronounced her "a most charming girl;" an opinion which, by a singular coincidence, they always entertained of any new pupil.

Preparations, on a scale of magnitude never before attempted, were incessantly made at Minerva House to give every effect to the forthcoming ball.

The evening came.

"How do I look, dear?" inquired Miss Emily Smithers, the belle of the house, of Miss Caroline Wilson, who was her bosom friend, because she was the ugliest girl in Hammersmith, or out of it.

"Oh, charming, dear! How do I?"

"Delightful! you never looked so handsome," returned the belle, adjusting her own dress, and not bestowing a glance on her poor companion.

"I hope young Hilton will come early," said another young lady.

"I'm sure he'd be highly flattered if he knew it," returned the other.

"Oh, he's so handsome!" said the first.

"Such a charming person!" added a second.

"Such a *distingué* air!" said a third.

"Oh! what do you think?" said another girl, running into the room. "Miss Crumpton says her cousin's coming."

"What! Theodosius Butler?" said everybody in raptures.

"Is he handsome?" inquired a novice.

"No, not particularly handsome," was the general reply; "but oh, so clever!"

The individual in question, Mr. Theodosius, had written a pamphlet containing some very weighty considerations on the expediency of doing something or other; and, as every sentence contained a good many words of four syllables, his admirers took it for granted that he meant a good deal.

"Perhaps that's he," exclaimed several young ladies.

An awful pause ensued. Some boxes arrived, and a young lady—Miss Brook Dingwall, in full ball costume, a most interesting expression of despair in her face. The Miss Crumptons inquired after the family with the most excruciating anxiety, and Miss Brook Dingwall was formally introduced to her future companions.

Repeated pulls at the bell, and arrivals too numerous to particularise. The interesting Lavinia Brook Dingwall was the only girl present who appeared to take no interest in the proceedings of the evening. Not even the announcement of the arrival of Mr. Theodosius Butler could induce her to leave the corner of the back drawing-room in which she was seated.

"Now, Theodosius," said Miss Maria Crumpton, "I must introduce you to our new pupil."

Theodosius looked as if he cared for nothing earthly. Miss Crumpton commenced the introduction in due form. Miss Brook Dingwall languidly raised her head.

"Edward!" she exclaimed, with a half-shriek, on seeing the well-known nankeen legs.

Fortunately, as Miss Maria Crumpton possessed no remarkable share of penetration, and as it was one of the diplomatic arrangements that no attention was to be paid to Miss Lavinia's incoherent exclamations, she was perfectly unconscious of the mutual agitation of the parties; and therefore, seeing that the offer of his hand for the next quadrille was accepted, she left him by the side of Miss Brook Dingwall.

"Oh, Edward! oh, Edward! is it you."

Mr. Theodosius assured the dear creature, in the most impassioned manner, that he was not conscious of being anybody but himself.

"Then why—why—this disguise? Oh, Edward M'Neville Walter, what have I not suffered on your account!"

"Lavinia, hear me," replied the hero in his most poetic strain. "Do not condemn me unheard. If anything that emanates from the soul of such a wretch as I can occupy a place in your recollection—if any being so vile deserve your notice—you may remember that I once published a pamphlet (and paid for its publication) entitled 'Considerations on the Policy of Removing the Duty on Bees'-wax.'"

"I do—I do!" sobbed Lavinia.

"That," continued the lover, "was a subject to which your father was devoted heart and soul."

"He was—he was!" reiterated the sentimentalist.

"I knew it," continued Theodosius tragically; "I knew it—I forwarded him a copy. He wished to know me. Could I disclose my real name? Never! No, I assumed that name which you have so often pronounced in tones of endearment. As M'Neville Walter, I devoted myself to the stirring cause; as M'Neville Walter, I gained your heart; in the same character I was ejected from your house by your father's domestics; and in no character at all have I since been enabled to see you. We now meet again, and I proudly own that I am—Theodosius Butler."

The young lady appeared perfectly satisfied with this argumentative address, and bestowed a look of the most ardent affection on the immortal advocate of bees'-wax.

"May I hope," said he, "that the promise your father's violent behaviour interrupted may be renewed?"

"Let us join this set," replied Lavinia coquettishly—for girls of nineteen *can* coquette.

"No," ejaculated he of the nankeens; "I stir not from this spot, writhing under this torture of suspense. May I—may I hope?"

"You may."

"The promise is renewed?"

"It is."

"I have your permission."

"You have."

"To the fullest extent."

"You know it," returned the blushing Lavinia. The contortions of the interesting Butler's visage expressed his raptures.

A fortnight after the date of the ball, Cornelius Brook Dingwall, Esq., M.P., was seated at the same library table, and in the same room, as we have before described. The footman tapped at the door. "Miss Crumpton" was announced. Oh, how she longed for the presence of a third party! Miss Crumpton began the duet. She hoped Mrs. Brook Dingwall and the handsome little boy were in good health. They were. Mrs. Brook Dingwall and little Frederick were at Brighton.

"Much obliged to you, Miss Crumpton," said Cornelius in his most dignified manner, "for your attention in calling this morning. I should have driven down to Hammersmith, to see Lavinia, but your account was so very satisfactory, and my duties in the House occupy me so much, that I determined to postpone it for a week. How has she gone on?"

"Very well, indeed, sir," returned Maria, dreading to inform the father that she had gone off.

"Ah! I thought the plan on which I proceeded would be a match for her. You have persevered strictly in the line of conduct I prescribed, Miss Crumpton?"

"Strictly, sir."

"You tell me in your note that her spirits gradually improved."

"Very much indeed, sir."

"To be sure. I was convinced they would."

"But I fear, sir," said Miss Crumpton with visible emotion, "I fear the plan has not succeeded quite so well as we could have wished."

"No!" exclaimed the prophet. "Miss Crumpton, you look alarmed. What has happened?"

"Miss Brook Dingwall, sir——"

"Yes, ma'am?"

"—Has gone, sir," said Maria, exhibiting a strong inclination to faint.

"Gone!"

"Eloped, sir."

"Eloped!—Who with—when—where—how?" almost shrieked the agitated M.P.

The natural yellow of the unfortunate Maria's face changed to all the hues of the rainbow as she laid a small packet on the member's table. He hurriedly opened it. A letter from his daughter, and another from Theodosius. He glanced over their contents—"Ere this reaches you, far distant—appeal to feelings—love to distraction—bees'-wax—slavery," &c., &c. He dashed his hand to his forehead, and paced the room with fearfully long strides, to the great alarm of the precise Maria.

"Now mind, from this time forward," said Mr. Brook Dingwall, "from this time forward I never will, under any circumstances whatever, permit a man who writes pamphlets to enter any other room of this house but the kitchen.—I'll allow my daughter and her husband one hundred and fifty pounds a year, and never see their faces again; and I'll bring in a bill for the abolition of finishing schools!"

Some time has elapsed since this passionate declaration. Mr. and Mrs. Butler are at present rusticating in a small cottage at Balls Pond. They have no family. Mr. Theodosius looks very important, and writes incessantly; but, in consequence of a gross combination on the part of the publishers, none of his productions appear in print. His young wife begins to think that ideal misery is preferable to real unhappiness; and that a marriage contracted in haste, and repented at leisure, is the cause of more substantial wretchedness than she ever anticipated.

Minerva House is *in statu quo*, and "The Misses Crumpton" remain in the peaceable and undisturbed enjoyment of all the advantages resulting from their Finishing School.

BARDELL AGAINST PICKWICK.

(Adapted.)

MR. PICKWICK stood up in a state of great agitation, and took a glance at the court on the morning of the memorable trial of Bardell against Pickwick. There were already a pretty large sprinkling of spectators in the gallery, and a numerous muster of gentlemen in wigs, in the barristers' seats: who presented, as a body, all that pleasing and extensive variety of nose and whisker for which the bar of England is so justly celebrated. Such of the gentlemen as had a brief to carry, carried it in as conspicuous a manner as possible, and occasionally scratched their noses therewith, to impress the fact more strongly on the observation of the spectators. Other gentlemen, who had no briefs to show, carried under their arms goodly octavos, with a red label behind, and that underdone-pie-crust-coloured cover, which is technically known as "law calf." Others, who had neither briefs nor books, thrust their hands into their pockets, and looked as wise as they conveniently could. The whole, to the great wonderment of Mr. Pickwick, were chatting and discussing the news of the day just as if no trial at all were coming on. Upon the entrance of the judge, there was a loud cry of "silence!" from the officers of the court.

Mr. Justice Stareleigh was a most particularly short man, and so fat, that he seemed all face and waistcoat. He rolled in upon two little turned legs, and having bobbed gravely to the bar, who bobbed gravely to him, put his little legs underneath his table.

A slight sensation was perceptible in the body of the court; and immediately afterwards Mrs. Bardell, supported by Mrs. Cluppins, was led in, and placed, in a drooping state, at the other end of the seat on which Mr. Pickwick sat. Mrs. Sanders then appeared, leading in Master Bardell. At sight of her child, Mrs. Bardell started; suddenly recollecting herself, she kissed him in a frantic manner; then relapsing into a state of hysterical imbecility, the good lady requested to be informed where she was.

"Bardell and Pickwick," cried the gentleman in black, calling on the case, which stood first on the list.

"I am for the plaintiff, my Lord," said Mr. Sergeant Buzfuz.

"Who is with you, brother Buzfuz?" said the judge. Mr. Skimpin bowed, to intimate that he was.

"I appear for the defendant, my Lord," said Mr. Sergeant Snubbin.

"Anybody with you, brother Snubbin?" inquired the court.

"Mr. Phunky, my Lord," replied Sergeant Snubbin.

"Sergeant Buzfuz and Mr. Skimpin for the plaintiff," said the judge, writing down the names in his note-book, and reading as he wrote; "for the defendant, Sergeant Snubbin and Mr. Monkey."

"Beg your Lordship's pardon, Phunky."

"Oh, very good," said the judge, "Go on."

The ushers again called silence, and Mr. Skimpin proceeded to "open the case."

Sergeant Buzfuz then rose with all the majesty and dignity which the grave nature of the proceedings demanded, and having whispered to Dodson, and conferred briefly with Fogg—the two attorneys for the plaintiff—pulled his gown over his shoulders, settled his wig, and addressed the jury:—

"Never, in the whole course of my professional experience—never from the very first moment of my applying myself to the study and practice of the law—have I approached a case with feelings of such deep emotion, or with such a heavy sense of the responsibility imposed upon me—a responsibility, I will say, which I could never have supported, were I not buoyed up and sustained by a conviction so strong, that it amounts to positive certainty that the cause of truth and justice, or, in other words, the cause of my much-injured and most oppressed client, must prevail with the high-minded and intelligent dozen of men whom I now see in that box before me.

"You have heard from my learned friend, gentlemen, that this is an action for breach of promise of marriage, in which the damages are laid at £1,500. But you have not heard from my learned friend, inasmuch as it did not come within my learned friend's province to tell you, what are the facts and circumstances of the case. Those facts and circumstances, gentlemen, you shall hear detailed by me, and proved by the unimpeachable female whom I will place in that box before you.

"The plaintiff is a widow; yes, gentlemen, a widow. The late Mr. Bardell, after enjoying, for many years, the esteem and confidence of his sovereign, as one of the guardians of his royal

revenues, glided almost imperceptibly from the world, to seek elsewhere for that repose and peace which a custom-house can never afford."

[A pathetic description of the decease of Mr. Bardell, who had been knocked on the head with a quart pot in a public-house cellar.]

"Some time before his death, he had stamped his likeness upon a little boy. With this little boy, the only pledge of her departed exciseman, Mrs. Bardell shrunk from the world, and courted the retirement and tranquillity of Goswell-street; and here she placed in her front parlour-window a written placard, bearing this inscription—'Apartments furnished for a single gentleman. Inquire within.' I entreat the attention of the jury to the wording of this document. 'Apartments furnished for a *single* gentleman!' Mrs. Bardell's opinions of the opposite sex, gentlemen, were derived from a long contemplation of the inestimable qualities of her lost husband. She had no fear, she had no distrust, she had no suspicion, all was confidence and reliance. 'Mr. Bardell,' said the widow; 'Mr. Bardell was a man of honour, Mr. Bardell was a man of his word, Mr. Bardell was no deceiver, Mr. Bardell was once a single gentleman himself; *to* single gentlemen I look for protection, for assistance, for comfort, and for consolation; *in* single gentlemen I shall perpetually see something to remind me of what Mr. Bardell was, when he first won my young and untried affections; to a single gentleman, then, shall my lodgings be let.' Actuated by this beautiful and touching impulse (among the best impulses of our imperfect nature, gentlemen), the lonely and desolate widow dried her tears, furnished her first floor, caught the innocent boy to her maternal bosom, and put the bill up in her parlour-window. Did it remain there long? No. The serpent was on the watch, the train was laid, the mine was preparing, the sapper and miner was at work. Before the bill had been in the parlour-window three days—three days—gentlemen—a Being, erect upon two legs, and bearing all the outward semblance of a man, and not of a monster, knocked at the door of Mrs. Bardell's house. He inquired within; he took the lodgings; and on the very next day he entered into possession of them. This man was Pickwick—Pickwick, the defendant.

"Of this man Pickwick I will say little; the subject presents but few attractions; and I, gentlemen, am not the man, nor are

you, gentlemen, the men, to delight in the contemplation of revolting heartlessness, and of systematic villainy.

"I shall show you, gentlemen, that for two years Pickwick continued to reside constantly, and without interruption or intermission, at Mrs. Bardell's house. I shall show you that Mrs. Bardell, during the whole of that time waited on him, attended to his comforts, cooked his meals, looked out his linen for the washerwoman when it went abroad, darned, aired, and prepared it for wear when it came home, and, in short, enjoyed his fullest trust and confidence. I shall show you that, on many occasions, he gave halfpence, and on some occasions even sixpences, to her little boy; and I shall prove to you, by a witness whose testimony it will be impossible for my learned friend to weaken or controvert, that on one occasion he patted the boy on the head, and, after inquiring whether he had won any *alley tors* or *commoneys* lately (both of which I understand to be a particular species of marbles much prized by the youth of this town), made use of this remarkable expression: 'How should you like to have another father?'"

"And now, gentlemen, but one word more. Two letters have passed between these parties, letters which are admitted to be in the handwriting of the defendant, and which speak volumes indeed. These letters, too, bespeak the character of the man. They are not open, fervent, eloquent epistles, breathing nothing but the language of affectionate attachment. They are covert, sly, underhanded communications, but, fortunately, far more conclusive than if couched in the most glowing language and the most poetic imagery—letters that must be viewed with a cautious and suspicious eye—letters that were evidently intended at the time, by Pickwick, to mislead and delude any third parties into whose hands they might fall. Let me read the first:—'Garraway's, twelve o'clock. Dear Mrs. B.—Chops and Tomata sauce. Yours, PICKWICK.' Gentlemen, what does this mean? Chops and Tomata sauce. Yours, Pickwick! Chops! Gracious heavens! and Tomata sauce! Gentlemen, is the happiness of a sensitive and confiding female to be trifled away by such shallow artifices as these? The next has no date whatever, which is in itself suspicious. 'Dear Mrs. B., I shall not be at home till to-morrow. Slow coach.' And then follows this very remarkable expression. 'Don't trouble yourself about the warming-pan.' The warming-pan! Why, gentlemen, who *does* trouble himself about a warming-pan? When was the

peace of mind of man or woman broken or disturbed by a warming-pan, which is in itself a harmless, a useful, and I will add, gentlemen, a comforting article of domestic furniture? Why is Mrs. Bardell so earnestly entreated not to agitate herself about this warming-pan, unless (as is no doubt the case) it is a mere cover for hidden fire—a mere substitute for some endearing word or promise, agreeably to a preconceived system of correspondence, artfully contrived by Pickwick with a view to his contemplated desertion, and which I am not in a condition to explain? And what does this allusion to the slow coach mean? For aught I know, it may be a reference to Pickwick himself, who has most unquestionably been a criminally slow coach during the whole of this transaction, but whose speed will now be very unexpectedly accelerated, and whose wheels, gentlemen, as he will find to his cost, will very soon be greased by you!”

“But enough of this, gentlemen, it is difficult to smile with an aching heart; it is ill jesting when our deepest sympathies are awakened. My client’s hopes and prospects are ruined, and it is no figure of speech to say that her occupation is gone indeed. The bill is down—but there is no tenant. Eligible single gentlemen pass and repass—but there is no invitation for them to inquire within or without. All is gloom and silence in the house; even the voice of the child is hushed; his infant sports are disregarded when his mother weeps; his ‘alley tors’ and his ‘commonneys’ are alike neglected; he forgets the long familiar cry of ‘knuckle down,’ and at tip-cheese, or odd and even, his hand is out. But Pickwick, gentlemen, Pickwick, the ruthless destroyer of this domestic oasis in the desert of Goswell Street—Pickwick, who has choked up the well, and thrown ashes on the sward—Pickwick, who comes before you to-day with his heartless Tomata sauce and warming-pans—Pickwick still rears his head with unblushing effrontery, and gazes without a sigh on the ruin he has made. Damages, gentlemen—heavy damages—is the only punishment with which you can visit him; the only recompense you can award to my client. And for those damages she now appeals to an enlightened, a high-minded, a right-feeling, a conscientious, a dispassionate, a sympathising, a contemplative jury of her civilised countrymen.” With this beautiful peroration, Mr. Sergeant Buzfuz sat down, and Mr. Justice Stareleigh woke up.

"Call Elizabeth Cluppins," said Sergeant Buzfuz, rising a minute afterwards, with renewed vigour.

The nearest usher called for Elizabeth Tuppins; another demanded Elizabeth Jupkins; and a third rushed in a breathless state into the street, and screamed for Elizabeth Muffins till he was hoarse.

Meanwhile Mrs. Cluppins was in the witness-box.

"Mrs. Cluppins," said Sergeant Buzfuz, "pray compose yourself, ma'am. Do you recollect, Mrs. Cluppins?—do you recollect being in Mrs. Bardell's back one pair of stairs, on one particular morning in July last, when she was dusting Pickwick's apartment?"

"Yes, my Lord and Jury, I do."

"Mr. Pickwick's sitting-room was the first floor front, I believe?"

"Yes it were, sir."

"What were you doing in the back room, ma'am?" inquired the little judge.

"My Lord and Jury, I will not deceive you."

"You had better not, ma'am," said the little judge.

"I was there, unbeknown to Mrs. Bardell; I had been out with a little basket, gentlemen, to buy three pound of red kidney purtaties, which was three pound tuppence ha'penny, when I see Mrs. Bardell's street door on the jar."

"On the what?" exclaimed the little judge.

"Partly open, my Lord," said Sergeant Snubbin.

"She *said* on the jar," said the little judge with a cunning look.

"It's all the same, my Lord," said Sergeant Snubbin. The little judge looked doubtful, and said he'd make a note of it. Mrs. Cluppins then resumed:

"I walked in, gentlemen, just to say good mornin', and went, in a permiscuous manner, upstairs, and into the back room. Gentlemen, there was the sound of voices in the front room, and——"

"And you listened, I believe, Mrs. Cluppins?" said Sergeant Buzfuz.

"Begging your pardon, sir, I would scorn the haction. The voices was very loud, sir, and forced themselves upon my ear."

"Well, Mrs. Cluppins, you were not listening, but you heard the voices. Was one of those voices, Pickwick's?"

"Yes, it were, sir."

And Mrs. Cluppins, after distinctly stating that Mr. Pickwick addressed himself to Mrs. Bardell, repeated by slow degrees,

and by dint of many questions, the conversation then heard by her.

The worthy lady was then taken out of court.

"Nathaniel Winkle!" said Mr. Skimpin.

"Here!" replied a feeble voice. Mr. Winkle entered the witness box.

"Now, sir," said Mr. Skimpin, "have the goodness to let his Lordship and the jury know what your name is, will you?"

"Winkle," replied the witness.

"What's your Christian name, sir?" angrily inquired the little judge.

"Nathaniel, sir."

"Daniel,—any other name?"

"Nathaniel, sir—my Lord, I mean."

"Nathaniel Daniel or Daniel Nathaniel?"

"No, my Lord, only Nathaniel; not Daniel at all."

"What did you tell me it was Daniel for, then, sir?"

"I didn't, my Lord."

"You did, sir. How could I have got Daniel on my notes, unless you told me so, sir?"

This argument was, of course, unanswerable.

"Mr. Winkle has rather a short memory, my Lord. We shall find means to refresh it before we have quite done with him, I dare say. Now, Mr. Winkle," said Mr. Skimpin, "attend to me, if you please, sir; and let me recommend you to be careful. I believe you are a particular friend of Pickwick, the defendant, are you not?"

"I have known Mr. Pickwick now, as well as I recollect at this moment, nearly——"

"Pray, Mr. Winkle, do not evade the question. Are you, or are you not, a particular friend of the defendant's?"

"I was just about to say, that——"

"Will you, or will you not, answer my question, sir?"

"If you don't answer the question you'll be committed, sir," interposed the judge.

"Come, sir," said Mr. Skimpin, "yes or no, if you please."

"Yes, I am," replied Mr. Winkle.

"Yes, you are. And why couldn't you say that at once, sir? Perhaps you know the plaintiff, too? Eh, Mr. Winkle?"

"I don't know her; I've seen her."

"Oh, you don't know her, but you've seen her? Now, have the goodness to tell the gentlemen of the jury what you mean by *that*, Mr. Winkle."

"I mean that I am not intimate with her, but I have seen her when I went to call on Mr. Pickwick in Goswell Street."

"How often have you seen her, sir?"

"How often?"

"Yes, Mr. Winkle, how often? I'll repeat the question for you a dozen times, if you require it, sir."

On this question there arose the edifying brow-beating customary on such points. First of all, Mr. Winkle said it was quite impossible for him to say how many times he had seen Mrs. Bardell. Then he was asked if he had seen her twenty times, to which he replied, "Certainly—more than that." Then he was asked whether he hadn't seen her a hundred times—whether he couldn't swear that he had seen her more than fifty times—whether he didn't know that he had seen her at least seventy-five times—and so forth.

"Pray, Mr. Winkle, do you remember calling on the defendant Pickwick at these apartments in the plaintiff's house in Goswell Street, on one particular morning, in the month of July last?"

"Yes, I do."

"Now, sir, tell the gentlemen of the jury what you saw on entering the defendant's room, on this particular morning. Come, out with it, sir; we must have it, sooner or later."

"The defendant, Mr. Pickwick, was holding the plaintiff in his arms, with his hands clasping her waist," replied Mr. Winkle with natural hesitation, "and the plaintiff appeared to have fainted away."

"Did you hear the defendant say anything?"

"I heard him call Mrs. Bardell a good creature, and I heard him ask her to compose herself, for what a situation it was, if anybody should come, or words to that effect."

"Now, Mr. Winkle, I have only one more question to ask you, and I beg you to bear in mind his Lordship's caution. Will you undertake to swear that Pickwick, the defendant, did not say on the occasion in question, 'My dear Mrs. Bardell, you're a good creature; compose yourself to this situation, for to this situation you must come,' or words to *that* effect?"

"I—I didn't understand him so, certainly. I was on the stair-

case, and couldn't hear distinctly; the impression on my mind is——"

"The gentlemen of the jury want none of the impressions on your mind, Mr. Winkle, which I fear would be of little service to honest, straightforward men. You were on the staircase, and didn't distinctly hear; but you will not swear that Pickwick did not make use of the expressions I have quoted? Do I understand that?"

"No, I will not," replied Mr. Winkle; and down sat Mr. Skimpin with a triumphant countenance.

Poor bewildered Mr. Winkle was then cross-examined, and when he had been thoroughly confused he was told to leave the box.

Tracy Tupman, and Augustus Snodgrass, were severally called into the box; both corroborated the testimony of their unhappy friend; and each was driven to the verge of desperation by excessive badgering.

Susannah Sanders was then called, and examined by Sergeant Buzfuz, and cross-examined by Sergeant Snubbin. Had always said and believed that Pickwick would marry Mrs. Bardell; knew that Mrs. Bardell's being engaged to Pickwick was the current topic of conversation in the neighbourhood, after the fainting in July. Thought Mrs. Bardell fainted away on the morning in July, because Pickwick asked her to name the day; knew that she (witness) fainted away stone dead when Mr. Sanders asked *her* to name the day, and believed that everybody as calls herself a lady would the same, under similar circumstances. During the period of her keeping company with Mr. Sanders, had received love letters, like other ladies. In the course of their correspondence Mr. Sanders had often called her a "duck," but never "chops," nor yet "tomata sauce." He was particularly fond of ducks. Perhaps if he had been as fond of chops and tomata sauce, he might have called her that, as a term of affection.

Sergeant Buzfuz now rose with more importance than he had yet exhibited, if that were possible, and vociferated: "Call Samuel Weller."

It was quite unnecessary to call Samuel Weller; for Samuel Weller stepped briskly into the box the instant his name was pronounced; and placing his hat on the floor, and his arms on the rail, took a bird's-eye view of the bar, and a comprehensive survey of the bench, with a remarkably cheerful and lively aspect.

"What's your name, sir?" inquired the judge.

"Sam Weller, my Lord," replied that gentleman.

"Do you spell it with a 'V' or a 'W'?"

"That depends upon the taste and fancy of the speller, my Lord. I never had occasion to spell it more than once or twice in my life, but I spells it with a 'V'."

Here a voice in the gallery exclaimed aloud, "Quite right too, Samivel, quite right. Put it down a we, my Lord, put it down a we."

"Who is that, who dares to address the court?" said the little judge, looking up. "Usher."

"Yes, my Lord."

"Bring that person here instantly."

"Yes, my Lord."

But as the usher didn't find the person, he didn't bring him; and, after a great commotion, all the people who had got up to look for the culprit, sat down again. The little judge turned to the witness as soon as his indignation would allow him to speak, and said,

"Do you know who that was, sir?"

"I rayther suspect it was my father, my Lord."

"Do you see him here now?"

"No, I don't, my Lord," replied Sam, staring right up into the lantern in the roof of the court.

"If you could have pointed him out, I would have committed him instantly."

Sam bowed his acknowledgments.

"Now, Mr. Weller," said Sergeant Buzfuz.

"Now, sir," replied Sam.

"I believe you are in the service of Mr. Pickwick, the defendant in this case. Speak up, if you please, Mr. Weller."

"I mean to speak up, sir. I am in the service o' that 'ere gen'l'm'n, and a wery good service it is."

"Little to do, and plenty to get, I suppose?"

"Oh, quite enough to get, sir, as the soldier said ven they ordered him three hundred and fifty lashes."

"You must not tell us what the soldier, or any other man, said, sir," interposed the judge; "it's not evidence."

"Wery good, my Lord," replied Sam.

"Do you recollect anything particular happening on the morning when you were first engaged by the defendant; eh, Mr. Weller?"

"Yes, I do, sir," replied Sam.

"Have the goodness to tell the jury what it was."

"I had a reg'lar new fit out o' clothes that mornin', gen'l'm'n of the jury, and that was a wery partickler and uncommon circumstance vith me in those days."

The little judge, looking over his desk, said, "You had better be careful, sir."

"So Mr. Pickwick said at the time, my Lord; and I was wery careful o' that 'ere suit o' clothes; wery careful indeed, my Lord."

"Do you mean to tell me, Mr. Weller, that you saw nothing of this fainting on the part of the plaintiff in the arms of the defendant, which you have heard described by the witnesses?"

"Certainly not; I was in the passage till they called me up, and then the old lady was not there."

"Now, attend, Mr. Weller. You were in the passage, and yet saw nothing of what was going forward. Have you a pair of eyes, Mr. Weller?"

"Yes, I have a pair of eyes, and that's just it. If they wos a pair o' patent double million magnifyin' gas microscopes of hextra power, p'raps I might be able to see through a flight o' stairs and a deal door; but bein' only eyes, you see, my wision's limited."

"Now, Mr. Weller, I'll ask you a question on another point, if you please."

"If you please, sir."

"Do you remember going up to Mrs. Bardell's house, one night in November last?"

"Oh, yes, wery well."

"Oh, you *do* remember that, Mr. Weller. I thought we should get at something at last."

"I rayther thought that too, sir."

"Well; I suppose you went up to have a little talk about this trial—eh, Mr. Weller?"

"I went up to pay the rent; but we *did* get a talking about the trial."

"Oh, you did get a talking about the trial. Now, what passed about the trial; will you have the goodness to tell us, Mr. Weller?"

"Vith all the pleasure in life, sir. Arter a few unimportant obserwations, from the two wirtuous females as has been examined here to-day, the ladies gets into a wery great state o' admiration

at the honourable conduct of Mr. Dodson and Fogg—they two gen'l'm'n as is settin' near you now."

"The attorneys for the plaintiff. Well! They spoke in high praise of the honourable conduct of Messrs. Dodson and Fogg, the attorneys for the plaintiff, did they?"

"Yes, they said what a wery gen'rous thing it was o' them to have taken up the case on spec, and to charge nothing at all for costs, unless they got 'em out of Mr. Pickwick."

"It's perfectly useless, my Lord, attempting to get at any evidence through the impenetrable stupidity of this witness. I will not trouble the court by asking him any more questions. Stand down, sir."

"Would any other gen'l'm'n like to ask me anythin'?"

"Not I, Mr. Weller, thank you," said Sergeant Snubbin, laughing.

Sam went down accordingly.

Sergeant Snubbin then addressed the jury on behalf of the defendant. It is sufficient to say, he did the best he could for Mr. Pickwick; and the best, as everybody knows, on the infallible authority of the old adage, could do no more.

Mr. Justice Stareleigh summed up, in the old-established and most approved form. He read as much of his notes to the jury as he could decipher on so short a notice, and made running comments on the evidence as he went along. If Mrs. Bardell were right, it was perfectly clear that Mr. Pickwick was wrong, and if they thought the evidence of Mrs. Cluppins worthy of credence they would believe it, and, if they didn't, why, they wouldn't. The jury then retired to their private room to talk the matter over.

An anxious quarter of an hour elapsed; the jury came back; the judge was fetched in.

"Gentlemen, are you all agreed upon your verdict?"

"We are."

"Do you find for the plaintiff, gentlemen, or for the defendant?"

"For the plaintiff."

"With what damages, gentlemen?"

"Seven hundred and fifty pounds."

Speechless with indignation, Mr. Pickwick allowed himself to be led by his solicitor and friends to the door, and there assisted into a hackney-coach, which had been fetched for the purpose, by the ever watchful Sam Weller.

Sam had put up the steps, and was preparing to jump upon the box, when he felt himself gently touched on the shoulder; and looking round, his father stood before him.

"I know'd what 'ud come o' this here mode o' doin' bisness. Oh, Sammy, Sammy, vy worn't there a alleybi!"

THE BLOOMSBURY CHRISTENING.

(Condensed.)

MR. NICODEMUS DUMPS—or, as his acquaintance called him, "Long Dumps"—was a bachelor, six feet high, and fifty years old; cross, cadaverous, odd, and ill-natured. The only real comfort of his existence was to make everybody about him wretched—then he might be truly said to enjoy life. He was afflicted with a situation in the Bank worth five hundred a year, and he rented a "first floor furnished," which he originally took because it commanded a dismal prospect of an adjacent churchyard. He adored King Herod for his massacre of the innocents; and, if he hated one thing more than another, it was a child.

Mr. Dumps had a nephew who had been married about a year, and who was somewhat of a favourite with his uncle. Mr. Charles Kitterbell was a small, sharp, spare man, with a very large head, and a broad, good-humoured countenance. He had a cast in his eye which rendered it quite impossible for any one with whom he conversed to know where he was looking. His eyes appeared fixed on the wall, and he was staring you out of countenance; in short, there was no catching his eye, and perhaps it is a merciful dispensation of Providence that such eyes are not catching. It may be added that Mr. Charles Kitterbell was one of the most credulous and matter-of-fact little personages that ever took to himself a wife, and *for* himself a house in Great Russell-street Bedford-square.

"No, but, uncle, you must—you really must promise to be god-father," said Mr. Kitterbell.

"I cannot, indeed I cannot," returned Dumps.

"Well, but why not? Jemima will think it very unkind. It's very little trouble."

"As to the trouble, I don't mind that; but my nerves are in that state—I cannot go through the ceremony. You know I don't

like going out—Charles, don't fidget with that stool so; you'll drive me mad!"

"I beg your pardon, uncle. But come, don't refuse. If it's a boy, you know, we must have two godfathers."

"*If* it's a boy! Why can't you say at once whether it *is* a boy or not?"

"I should be very happy, but it's impossible to say if the child isn't born yet."

"Not born yet! Oh! well, it *may* be a girl, and then you won't want me; or, if it is a boy, it *may* die before it's christened. Fits I am told, are exceedingly common, and alarming convulsions are almost matters of course. My landlady was confined—let me see—last Tuesday: an uncommonly fine boy. On the Thursday night the nurse was sitting with him upon her knee before the fire, and he was as well as possible. Suddenly he became black in the face, and alarmingly spasmodic. The medical man was instantly sent for, and every remedy was tried, but the child died of course. However, your child *may* not die; and if it should be a boy, and should *live* to be christened, why I suppose I must be one of the sponsors."

A day or two afterwards, as Dumps was perusing a morning paper, the following paragraph met his eye:—

"*Births.*—On Saturday, the 18th inst., in Great Russell-street, the lady of Charles Kitterbell, Esq., of a son."

"It *is* a boy!" he exclaimed, dashing down the paper. "It *is* a boy!" But he speedily regained his composure as his eye rested on a paragraph quoting the number of infant deaths from the bills of mortality.

Six weeks passed away, and Dumps was beginning to flatter himself that the child was dead, when the following note painfully resolved his doubts:—

"Great Russell-street,

"*Monday Morning.*

"DEAR UNCLE,—You will be delighted to hear that my dear Jemima has left her room, and that your future godson is getting on capitally. He was very thin at first, but he is getting much larger, and nurse says he is filling out every day. He cries a good deal, and is a very singular colour, which made Jemima and me rather uncomfortable; but, as nurse says it's natural, and as of course we know nothing about these things yet, we are quite

satisfied with what nurse says. We think he will be a sharp child; and nurse says she's sure he will, because he never goes to sleep. You will readily believe that we are all very happy, only we're a little worn out for want of rest, as he keeps us awake all night; but this we must expect, nurse says, for the first six or eight months. He has been vaccinated, but in consequence of the operation being rather awkwardly performed, some small particles of glass were introduced into the arm with the matter. Perhaps this may in some degree account for its being rather fractious; at least, so nurse says. We propose to have him christened at twelve o'clock on Friday, by the name of Frederick Charles William. Pray don't be later than a quarter before twelve. We shall have a very few friends in the evening, when of course we shall see you. I am sorry to say that the dear boy appears rather restless and uneasy to day: the cause, I fear, is fever.

“ Believe me, dear Uncle,

“ Yours affectionately,

“ CHARLES KITTERBELL.

“ P.S.—I open this note to say that we have just discovered the cause of little Frederick's restlessness. It is not fever, as I apprehended, but a small pin, which nurse accidentally stuck in his leg yesterday evening. We have taken it out, and he appears more composed, though he still sobs a good deal.”

It was impossible to recede, however, and so he put the best face—that is to say, an uncommonly miserable one—upon the matter; and purchased a handsome silver mug for the infant Kitterbell, upon which he ordered the initials “ F.C.W.K.,” to be engraved forthwith.

Dumps was on the staircase of No. 14 Great Russell-street on the appointed day, at the appointed time. The female servant ushered him into a front drawing-room.

“ Ah, uncle !” said Mr. Kitterbell, “ how d'ye do ? Allow me—Jemima, my dear—my uncle. I think you've seen Jemima before, sir ? ”

“ Have had the *pleasure*.”

“ I'm sure,” said Mrs. Kitterbell—“ I'm sure—hem—any friend—of Charles's—hem—much less a relation, is——”

“ I knew you'd say so, my love,” said little Kitterbell, who,

while he appeared to be gazing on the opposite houses, was looking at his wife with a most affectionate air.

"Jane, tell nurse to bring down baby," said Mrs. Kitterbell, addressing the servant. Mrs. Kitterbell was a tall, thin young lady, with very light hair, and a particularly white face—one of those young women who almost invariably, though one hardly knows why, recall to one's mind the idea of a cold fillet of veal. Out went the servant, and in came the nurse, with a remarkably small parcel in her arms, packed up in a blue mantle trimmed with white fur.—This was the baby.

"Now, uncle," said Mr. Kitterbell, lifting up that part of the mantle which covered the infant's face, with an air of great triumph, "*who* do you think he's like?"

"How small he is!" cried the amiable uncle; "*remarkably* small indeed."

"Do you think so? He's a monster to what he was—but who is he like?"

"I really don't know *who* he is like."

"Don't you think he's like *me*?"

"Oh, *decidedly* not! *Decidedly* not like you. Oh, certainly not!"

"Like Jemima?"

"Oh dear no; not in the least! I'm no judge, of course, in such cases; but I really think he's more like one of those little carved representations that one sometimes sees blowing a trumpet on a tombstone!"

"Well!" said the disappointed little father, "you'll be better able to tell what he's like by-and-by. You shall see him this evening with his mantle off."

"Thank you," said Dumps, feeling particularly grateful.

"Now, my love," said Kitterbell to his wife, "it's time we were off. We're to meet the other godfather and the godmother at the church, uncle.—My love, are you well wrapped-up?"

"Yes, dear."

"Are you sure you won't have another shawl?"

"No, sweet," returned the charming mother, accepting Dumps's proffered arm; and the little party entered the hackney coach that was to take them to the church; Dumps *amusing* Mrs. Kitterbell by expatiating largely on the danger of measles, thrush, teeth-cutting, and other interesting diseases to which children are subject.

The ceremony (which occupied about five minutes) passed off without anything particular occurring.

Evening came—and so did Dumps's pumps, black silk stockings, and white cravat. As he was crossing a corner, a man, apparently intoxicated, rushed against him, and would have knocked him down, had he not been caught by a very genteel young man, who happened to be close to him at the time. The gentleman took his arm, and in the kindest manner walked with him for some distance, and he for about the first time in his life, felt grateful and polite.

"There are at least some well-disposed men in the world," ruminated the misanthropical Dumps.

Rat—tat—ta—ra—ra—ra—rat—knocked a hackney coachman at Kitterbell's door, just as the unfortunate man reached it.

"It's a large party," sighed the unhappy godfather.

"How are you?" said little Kitterbell.

"How many people are there up-stairs?"

"Oh, not above thirty-five! But, uncle, what's the matter? What have you lost? Your pocket-book? card-case? snuff-box? the key of your lodgings?"

"No! no!" ejaculated Dumps, diving eagerly into his empty pocket.

"Not—not—the *mug* you spoke of this morning?"

"Yes, the *mug*!" replied Dumps, sinking into a chair.

"Yes! yes! I see it all; miserable dog that I am—I was born to suffer! I see it all; it was the gentlemanly-looking young man!"

"Mr. Dumps!" shouted the greengrocer in a stentorian voice, as he ushered the somewhat recovered godfather into the drawing-room.

"Happy to see you again," said Mrs. Kitterbell; "you must allow me to introduce you to a few of our friends. My mamma, Mr. Dumps—my papa and sisters."

"Uncle," said little Kitterbell, "you must let me lead you to the other end of the room, to introduce you to my friend Danton. Such a splendid fellow!—I'm sure you'll like him—this way." Dumps followed as tractably as a tame bear.

Mr Danton was a young man of about five-and-twenty, with a considerable stock of impudence, and a very small share of ideas. He had acquired, somehow or other, the reputation of being a

great wit, and accordingly, whenever he opened his mouth, everybody who knew him laughed very heartily.

The introduction took place in due form.

"Very warm," said Dumps.

"Yes. It was warmer yesterday. I have great pleasure in congratulating you on your first appearance in the character of a father, sir—godfather, I mean." The young ladies were convulsed, and the gentlemen in ecstasies.

A general hum of admiration interrupted the conversation, and announced the entrance of nurse with the baby. An universal rush of the *young* ladies immediately took place. (Girls are always so fond of babies *in company*.)

"Oh, you dear!" said one.

"How sweet!" cried another.

"Heavenly!" added a third.

"Oh, what dear little arms!" said a fourth, holding up an arm and fist about the size and shape of a leg of a fowl cleanly picked.

"Did you ever?"

"Never in my life."

"Oh! *do* let me take it, nurse. The love! Can it open its eyes, nurse?" Suffice it to say that the *single* ladies unanimously voted him an angel, and that the *married* ones, *nem. con.*, agreed that he was decidedly the finest baby they had ever beheld—*except their own*.

The "sit-down supper" was excellent. The *young* ladies didn't eat much for fear it shouldn't look romantic, and the *married* ladies ate as much as possible, for fear they shouldn't have enough.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said long Dumps, rising towards the end of the evening, "in accordance with what is, I believe, the established usage on these occasions, I, as one of the godfathers of Master Frederick Charles William Kitterbell, venture to rise to propose a toast. I need hardly say that it is the health and prosperity of that young gentleman, the particular event of whose early life we are here met to celebrate—(applause). Ladies and gentlemen, it is impossible to suppose that our friends here, whose sincere well-wishers we all are, can pass through life without some trials, considerable suffering, severe affliction, and heavy losses! That these trials may be long spared them is my most earnest prayer, my most fervent wish (a distinct sob from the grandmother). I hope and trust, ladies and gentlemen, that the infant whose

christening we have this evening met to celebrate may not be removed from the arms of his parents by premature decay; that his young and now *apparently* healthy form may not be wasted by lingering disease (great sensation manifest among the married ladies). You, I am sure, will concur with me in wishing that he may live to be a comfort and a blessing to his parents. ('Hear, hear!' and an audible sob from Mr. Kitterbell.) But should he not be what we could wish—should he forget in after-times the duty which he owes to them—should they unhappily experience that distracting truth, 'How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child'——" Here Mrs. Kitterbell went into violent hysterics, leaving her better half in almost as bad a condition, and a general impression in Dumps's favour; for people like sentiment after all.

THE CHILDREN.

When the lessons and tasks are all ended,
And the school for the day is dismissed,
And the little ones gather around me,
To bid me "good night" and be kissed;
Oh the little white arms that encircle
My neck in a tender embrace;
Oh the smiles that are halos of heaven,
Shedding sunshine of love on my face.

And when they are gone I sit dreaming
Of my childhood too lovely to last;
Of love that my heart will remember,
While it wakes to the pulse of the past,—
Ere the world and its wickedness made me
A partner of sorrow and sin;
When the glory of God was about me,
And the glory of gladness within.

Oh, my heart grows as weak as a woman's,
And the fountains of feeling will flow
When I think of the paths steep and stony
Where the feet of the dear ones must go;

Of the mountains of sin hanging o'er them,
Of the tempest of fate blowing wild ;
Oh, there's nothing on earth half so holy
As the innocent heart of a child.

They are idols of hearts and of households ;
They are angels of God in disguise ;
His sunlight still sleeps in their tresses ;
His glory still gleams in their eyes.
Oh, those truants from home and from heaven,
They have made me more manly and mild,
And I know now how Jesus could liken
The Kingdom of God to a child.

I ask not a life for the dear ones
All radiant, as others have done ;
But that life may have just enough shadow
To temper the glare of the sun ;
I would pray God to guard them from evil,
But my prayer would bound back to myself ;
Oh, a seraph may pray for a sinner,
But a sinner must pray for himself.

The twig is so easily bended,
I have banished the rule and the rod ;
I have taught them the goodness of knowledge,
They have taught me the wisdom of God.
My heart is a dungeon of darkness,
Where I shut them from breaking a rule ;
My frown is sufficient correction ;
My love is the law of the school.

I shall leave the old house in the Autumn,
To traverse its threshold no more ;
Ah ! how I shall sigh for the dear ones
That mustered each morn at the door !
I shall miss the "good-nights" and the kisses,
And the gush of their innocent glee,
The group on the green, and the flowers
That are brought every morning to me.

I shall miss them at morn and at eve,
 Their song in the school and the street ;
I shall miss the low hum of their voices,
 And the tramp of their delicate feet.
When the lessons and tasks are all ended,
 And Death says, “ the school is dismissed ! ”
May the little ones gather around me,
 To bid me “ good night ” and be kissed.

[It is stated that the above Poem was found in the desk of Charles Dickens after his death.]

THE END.

New and Revised Edition.

Price Three Shillings and Sixpence.

THE MODERN ELOCUTIONIST,

DEDICATED BY SPECIAL PERMISSION TO

Her Grace the Duchess of Marlborough.

COMPILED AND EDITED

BY

JOHN A. JENNINGS, B.A.,

TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

DUBLIN :

CARSON BROTHERS, 7, GRAFTON STREET.

LONDON : SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, & CO.

HAMILTON, ADAMS, & CO.

A Selection of Press Opinions will be found in the following pages.

NOTE.

Two additional features may be noticed in this NEW AND REVISED EDITION—the extracts selected from various prose works having proved so acceptable, CONDENSATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS are now introduced; also a selection of NEW POEMS, together with NOTES on such passages as seemed to require elucidation.

THIS work has been already adopted in the following, amongst other, Educational Establishments in Dublin :—

Alexandra College.	Rathmines School.
Rutland School.	The Church of Ireland Young
Queen's Institute.	Men's Christian Association.
Mrs. Beatty's Ladies' School.	Incorporated Society's Train-
Wesley College.	ing, Scientific, and Commer-
Adelaide Hall School, Merrion.	cial Institution, Santry.

And in the—

High School, Queen's College,	Academical Institution, Cole-
Birmingham.	raine.
Methodist College, Belfast.	Farra College, Co. Westmeath.

Many schools throughout England and Scotland also use it as a text-book.

Very commendatory letters have been received from numerous Fellows and Professors in the University of Dublin, and from the Principals of Schools.

Subjoined is a specimen :—

“ *March 10th, 1879.*

“ I regard the publication of Mr. Jennings' MODERN ELOCUTIONIST with extreme satisfaction. Such a work was much needed, as the former selections were worn threadbare by constant repetition. Here all is new ground. The choice made is such as might be expected when the editor's long scholastic experience was brought to bear on the subject. The introductory remarks are admirably clear, sound, and practical. Simplicity is aimed at, and helpfulness is the result. I can cordially commend the volume as an eminently desirable one for use in schools—the best proof of my approval being, that I have adopted it here.

“ MAXWELL M'INTOSH, LL.D.,

“ Head Master, Wesley College, Dublin.”

A SELECTION

FROM THE

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

LONDON.

"The author, who is a member of Trinity College, Dublin, has here revived, with no little success, a kind of work which used to be very popular. It appears as if the interest now taken in the drama is gradually leading to an improvement in the art of elocution, and certainly not before it was needed. There is another feature connected with this movement which cannot be overlooked, and of this Mr. Jennings has availed himself with great taste and judgment. We allude to the many new forms of literature which have been brought forward of late years. The old high sounding, mouthy school of piece which used to be popular with our forefathers has given place to a class of literature requiring greater variety on the part of the speaker, and Mr. Jennings, perceiving this, has given the reciter a choice of some of the finest modern pieces, including several excellent specimens of American authors. A poem of extraordinary fascination, which will be new to most readers, is entitled 'The Children,' and was said to be found in Charles Dickens' desk after his death. The collection does the editor credit, and the book will be found very useful to the student of elocution."—*The Era*.

"Lovers of readings and recitations, whether for purposes of education or of entertainment, will find in THE MODERN ELOCUTIONIST, by John A. Jennings (Carson Brothers, Dublin), a volume much to be commended for good arrangement, and still more for a copious selection of comparatively unhackneyed pieces, humorous or pathetic, from the most popular modern writers of England and America."—*The Graphic*.

"Mr. John A. Jennings' MODERN ELOCUTIONIST will be welcomed by all who give so-called 'readings,' or who teach elocution, or who desire to possess a book containing some of the less-known and hackneyed quotations, but also some of the most interesting, from our best authors. It is an admirable compilation."—*The Hornet*.

A SELECTION FROM THE OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"THE MODERN ELOCUTIONIST, compiled and edited by Mr. J. A. Jennings, of Trinity College, Dublin, claims to 'differ from other collections in its freshness of selection.' This description is fairly borne out by its contents, which comprise pieces from English and American authors, well chosen and adapted for the purpose of the book."—*The Daily News*.

"THE MODERN ELOCUTIONIST, compiled and edited by John A. Jennings, of Trinity College, Dublin, seems more carefully and judiciously selected than is usually the case with books of 'Readings.' All who have had to do with elocutionary entertainments know the difficulties of controlling the programme, and of keeping back what offends good taste, if not morality or religion. The Introduction contains some good remarks on reading in public."—*The Record*.

"THE MODERN ELOCUTIONIST.—This is one of the best selections of pieces for reading and recitation we have seen. The compiler evidently knows what is suited for platform delivery and what is not, and he has chosen just those which are sure to go well with almost any audience. Another merit of the work is that the selections are, as a whole, much less worn and familiar than usual. Anyone who is in the habit of taking part in penny readings and similar entertainments will find this volume very useful."—*The Rock*.

DUBLIN.

"This volume will be recognised with pleasure as the work of a gentleman who has won a high reputation as an elocutionist and reader. It was generally felt that, for the purpose of cultivating a taste for correct and expressive reading—a branch of education too long neglected—it was desirable that a new set of examples, taken out of the beaten track, should be collected. Mr. Jennings has made a perfectly fresh and attractive selection, embracing a great variety of subjects in poetry and prose, extracted from a host of authors, and illustrating every phase of passion and humour. They have been chosen, with scholarly taste and discrimination, chiefly from modern authors, but also from the old standard works. The volume is brought out in the best style."—*The Daily Express*.

A SELECTION FROM THE OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"For the first time Mr. Jennings, the well-known Dublin reader, comes before us for notice as a compiler. His work has just left the press, and appears under the above title in a well-bound, sensible volume, light for the hand and pleasant to the eye. Its contents are characterised by a novelty as agreeable as it is rare in such compilations, and the judgment proved by the selection made is undoubtedly the result of sympathy. To enter into an enumeration of the extracts and complete pieces is not our intention. For the present purpose it will be sufficient to note that they are remarkable for both earnest beauty and genuine worth. The names of the first literary stars in the United Kingdom are many in the list of authors, and amongst them, shining with no borrowed light, but with an effulgence self-created, we find the best of our own city poets. The humorous division is highly nineteenth century, and strongly American, and the serious selections are tinged with advanced philosophy and modern German realism. In conclusion, taken from the school-literature point of view, or looked at as a culling of beautiful poems made by a loving hand, we regard *THE MODERN ELOCUTIONIST* secure of success, and, in wishing it what it deserves, we recommend it in good faith to our readers."—*The Freeman's Journal*.

"The well-won reputation of Mr. Jennings as a 'Reader' has qualified him in an eminent degree for the production of the volume before us. The selections are such as commend the book to the attention of teachers as well as that of the general reader. Although freshness and novelty are found the distinguishing character of the contents, gems of English classic literature from Shakspeare, Goldsmith, Macaulay, Dickens, Jerrold, Lamb, Sheridan, Rogers, &c., have been retained. We are glad to find that Mr. Jennings has enriched his book by selections from American writers—Willis, Holmes, Whittier, Bret Harte, and Clemens (Mark Twain) being well represented in his pages. In his Introduction, Mr. Jennings has given plain and thoroughly sound instruction on the rare art of reading well, an accomplishment possessed by few, and which may be acquired by all who follow the essential rules he propounds and illustrates. We confidently bespeak for *THE MODERN ELOCUTIONIST* a wide and permanent circulation in schools, as well as in the libraries of all those who desire a selection of extracts expressing humour, pathos, and the deeper emotions of the human heart."—*The Irish Times*.

A SELECTION FROM THE OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"The gentleman who is compiler of this volume has been for some time known as a painstaking and accomplished elocutionist in Dublin. His Readings have been attended by numbers, and have had a decided educational value. Mr. Jennings has been permitted to dedicate his book to her Grace the Duchess of Marlborough, and it seems worthy of this patronage as an excellent book for use in schools, and one likely also to prove most agreeable in those family circles where a taste for good reading is cultivated. Mr. Jennings, in a modest preface, claims very justly for his book the merit of freshness of selection. His directions to readers are brief, but we can warmly commend them. These are evidently the result of experience. No more suitable present could be made than Mr. Jennings' book; and we hope it will have a large sale, and disestablish some of the very inferior recitation books that have been long in use, and the pieces in which have become hackneyed and tiresome from repetition. Mr. Jennings' volume has been carefully edited, and is printed in very clear and suitable letter."—*The Dublin Mail*.

"This well-chosen and attractive compilation of selections from the best-known authors is dedicated by its talented editor to her Grace the Duchess of Marlborough, and is in every way entitled to take the premier place among works of this kind. As a gifted and thoughtful reader Mr. Jennings stands admittedly in the front rank of modern elocutionists; and it was only to be expected that, guided by the matured judgment and finished taste which he abundantly possesses, his efforts in the task of selection from the prose and poetry of men whose names are famous wherever the English tongue is spoken, should result in a volume whose contents will charm while they will instruct all who may peruse its delightful pages. The letterpress is clear and distinct, and the book altogether is one of the pleasantest we would desire with which to spend a thoroughly enjoyable evening."—*The Intermediate Educational Record and Review*.

"Although not coming within the range of legal literature, this book deserves a few words from us. Mr. Jennings is a young gentleman who has won for himself a high reputation as a public Reader, and has lately published the result of his experience. He has culled the most beautiful passages in the literature of the English language, not only in past time, but also in the present; and it is pleasing to observe he does not interpolate his own readings in his Shakspeare selections—an egotism prevalent among most public Readers."—*Irish Law Times*.

A SELECTION FROM THE OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"To this tasteful work, dedicated to the Duchess of Marlborough, we are constrained to award very high praise. Its literary qualities are first-class, and the print, binding, &c., in good style. It is too common for good books to bear a price that is for many readers a prohibition, but this volume is at once the best and cheapest of its kind. The compiler is a student of Trinity College, and for some years has been favourably known to the cultivated public as a Reader. That a young student of Trinity College should succeed so well in such an undertaking is really most gratifying to all who believe in Irish talent. Mr. Jennings aims at producing a good school-book useful to young people, clergymen, and others, who study elocution. For good reading he gives one golden rule—*feel what you read*; and he furnishes the intended reader with selections, grave and gay, so well chosen that if the reader cannot *feel* them we would advise him to desist entirely from attempting to read. Of the undramatic pieces there is hardly one that can have been hackneyed by use or misuse—all is virgin soil. We heartily welcome this book to the office of educating our youth, and we predict for it no small measure of literary success."—*Saunders' Daily News*.

"We really wanted a good modern collection. Few persons were better qualified to undertake this task than the gifted author of the valuable work now before us. Mr. Jennings has succeeded well in his work, whether we regard the authors themselves from whom he has borrowed, the pieces selected, or the taste exhibited in the order and arrangement of the different parts of the book."—*The Irish Church Advocate*.

"We have turned over the pages of this volume with genuine pleasure, and we have no hesitation in stating, that a more choice selection of readings or pieces for recitation could not be gleaned from the productions of modern authors. The work consists of four divisions, the first containing numerous prose and poetic pieces; the second division consists of humorous pieces; the third division gives dramatic pieces from the plays of Lytton, Coleman, Goldsmith, Sheridan, and Sheridan Knowles. The fourth division is drawn altogether from Shakspeare's plays, and contains the principal speeches of the dramatic writings of the great master. From a work containing so many beautiful pieces in poetry and prose it would be invidious to give extracts; but the collection fully displays the refined and intellectual taste of the learned editor. We cordially recommend the work to our readers, and feel certain it will become a favourite with the schools and colleges of the country. The printing and binding are creditable to the publisher."—*Irish Teachers' Journal*.

A SELECTION FROM THE OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"At the suggestion of numerous principals of schools in Dublin, and of his friends and pupils in Trinity College, Mr. J. A. Jennings has been induced to compile and edit the work before us, and it gives ample evidence of his fitness and ability for the task imposed upon him. The introductory remarks on the art of reading are modestly put forth. Coming from one who has attained to pre-eminence in the art, they will be found to contain many suggestions and hints of much practical value. We commend this work as a really useful addition to the parish library; while in the school and at home it will prove a never-failing source of pleasant and instructive reading."—*Irish Ecclesiastical Gazette*.

EDINBURGH.

"The recitations to be met in most 'Elocutionists,' however suitable many of them are for class purposes, have become so hackneyed by constant repetition that it is a relief to turn over the pages of this collection. In a brief introduction Mr. Jennings gives a few judicious notes on the management of the voice, action, &c., as well as some observations on the advantages of the study of elocution. This work will make a capital textbook, and it may be added that it is neatly printed and strongly bound, while it has a carefully prepared double index."—*Edinburgh Courant*.

"Many books have been issued with a view to meet the wants of those desiring to make elocution a branch of study, but rarely have they become really popular. The issue of *THE MODERN ELOCUTIONIST* will, however, be well received, from the fact that it is peculiarly adapted for the object it seeks to carry out. Mr. Jennings has succeeded most admirably in his task; and, having been able to draw upon many different sources, has compiled a book that will secure for itself a high place among those of its kind. The selections have been made with a singularly fine taste. In the introduction to the *ELOCUTIONIST*, Mr. Jennings gives a few hints which, if always kept in view, will be found of great value to those studying elocution."—*Edinburgh Daily Review*.

"The compiler, Mr. Jennings, provides a large number of selections, grave and gay, in prose and verse, which he thinks suitable as exercises for the student of elocution, offering a few preliminary suggestions as to pronunciation, gesture, management of the voice, changes of tone, &c., which are sensible in themselves, and clearly set forth. The selections are, for the most part, well chosen, and include many specimens of modern literature not commonly to be met with in works of this class."—*The Scotsman*.

GLASGOW

"Under the above title, bound neatly and printed in an excellent type, Mr. Jennings adds one more to the many treatises on this much-neglected art. Mr. Jennings, who hails from Trinity College, Dublin, has been long recognised as an able teacher and public reader, and the present work claims attention from all interested in this particular branch of education, not only on account of the sound practical common-sense principles he advocates with respect to the means of its acquirement, but from the value of the selections. The desirability of such a work, wherein the writer brings forth from his treasure things new and old, has long been felt. To novelty in the selection of pieces the public has too long been a stranger, and whilst the well-known Parliamentary orations of a century since, antiquated pulpit extracts, and hackneyed poems and recitations have found their way so often into manuals of this kind as at length to utterly nauseate the pupils by their repetition, many of the finer, more thrilling, and truly poetic morceaux of the more modern authors have been ignored. Mr. Jennings' selection is as pleasing and useful as it is original. Everything bordering on the old lumbering, didactic, or dry style has been omitted. Copious selections from Dickens, Robert and Elizabeth Browning, Lamb, Longfellow, Bret Harte, Mark Twain, Macaulay, Poe, Whittier, Willis, Leigh Hunt, Hood, and Scott take their place and go hand-in-hand with pieces from less known, though equally effective, writers. Prominent in the collection are some charming Carleton ballads, and Mosely's well-known Charity Dinner, made memorable through its rendering by the late lamented Mr. J. M. Bellew. In the dramatic and Shaksperian selections Mr. Jennings has been no less happy than in those of his prose and poetry. Unlike too many teachers of the art, the present compiler does not weary the reader with the details of a special system of sounds, inflections or system of emphasis, of which (speaking for ourselves at least) we may say we have never been able to comprehend one-hundredth part. His suggestions are brief, but they are clear, simple, and invaluable. Briefly, the book will fulfil not only its highest use in respect to the interest and instruction it will carry with it to the class-room, but as a volume the contents will equally please and amuse all—a companion for school and a solace to the wearied by boat, 'bus, or rail.'—*North British Daily Mail*, January 10, 1880.

Miscellaneous.

BELFAST.

"Mr. Jennings' compilation, at present before us, is essentially a MODERN ELOCUTIONIST. It contains many selections which appeal to the more cultured members of an audience of the present day, and many which commend themselves to general listeners.

With regard to the quality of the collected poems in the volume, we can safely say that the selections are as good as any that could be read in public, or recited. It must be said that on the whole Mr. Jennings' collection is highly satisfactory."—*Belfast News-Letter*.

"This book is not a treatise on the art of elocution—although the editor, in his Introduction, gives some useful hints to beginners—but a collection of pieces suitable for reading. The idea has been to present more 'modern' or fresher selections than those to be found in the many standard works now in use. The editor has selected largely from the works of American authors, and has displayed considerable judgment in the choice of pieces that may be read effectively. Excellent recitations of every kind—serious, humorous, and dramatic—are to be found in Mr. Jennings' book, which is dedicated, by permission, to the Duchess of Marlborough."—*The Northern Whig*.

CORK.

"The appearance of this work is singularly opportune. The need of a really good ELOCUTIONIST was much felt. Not but that there were several of the older works which fairly supplied the want for the young, and which contained many well known and admirably arranged selections. But these collections were, from frequent repetition, as our author hints, necessarily hackneyed. To provide a book which would contain short readings suitable for practice in the schoolroom, or in the family circle, or to amuse an audience, and embracing some more recent poems and extracts, was the task which Mr. Jennings attempted to discharge. We must say he has completely succeeded. The book before us is certainly as useful a one as we could place in the reader's hand. The division, in both prose and poetry, is made into the 'serious and pathetic' and the 'humorous.' And certainly we can congratulate Mr. Jennings on the admirable choice he has made. We

A SELECTION FROM THE OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

strongly recommend this new ELOCUTIONIST to the notice of school teachers and others who are engaged in teaching this most important art. In after-life to be a good reader and speaker must, in great measure, depend on the early and careful training of the young. No gift is more precious, and there is none more envied. So, unfortunately, is it seldom found. In whatever sphere of life a man is placed this preparation will prove of infinite service. The advantage it gives him over his less-favoured fellows is incalculable. And whether at home with the family, or in the public school, the cultivation of a correct method of speaking and reading is, we regret to say, too often neglected. Hence it is that we hail with pleasure this well-timed effort of Mr. Jennings, and cordially recommend the work"—*Cork Constitution*.

"There is a really capital collection of pieces, grave and gay—some of them from authors not always immediately accessible to the general reader, and all of them characterised by decided merit."—*The Cork Examiner*.

DERRY.

"We predict a large sale of this work. It is a good-sized volume of nearly 500 pages, and contains an excellent selection of entertaining reading. The author, or rather the compiler and editor, Mr. John A. Jennings, Trinity College, Dublin, has picked the cream of the productions of our most popular and admired writers—in fact, the audience would be difficult to please whose tastes a reader could not suit from Mr. Jennings' work. We would particularly recommend those inclined for public, or indeed for private, reading, to carefully study Mr. Jennings' Introduction—it will be found full of useful hints, conveyed in brief but clear language. We have pleasure in recommending the compilation to the patronage of our readers."—*The Derry Journal*.

LEEDS.

"A work which will be welcomed alike by tutor and pupil has been issued. It is an Elocution the merit of which lies not wholly in the fact that it introduces an almost entirely new series of selections. It contains a clear statement of rules required for the management of the voice, gesture, and other aids to appropriate expression in speaking or reading. These will be found of great value in the acquirement of grace of delivery and a cultured style. Freshness in the characteristic of the selections. Even in those from Shakespeare, hackneyed pieces have as far as possible been avoided, and the quota-

A SELECTION FROM THE OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

tions are arranged in their probable chronological sequence. Again, the selections are in divisions—serious, pathetic, &c., which includes poetry and prose pieces in subdivisions; humorous selections, similarly treated; and dramatic. Reference is made easy by a list of 'contents' and an index to authors."—*Leeds Mercury*.

LIMERICK.

"To enter upon hitherto untrodden ground with a just sense of appreciation of the beautiful, whenever it is to be found, requires most delicate discrimination. Mr. Jennings has, we should say, fulfilled all these obligations. His really beautiful compilation is worthy of highest praise. The grave, the gay—every style, every characteristic that can elucidate either the powers or the taste of the reader is successively given, and Mr. Jennings leaves nothing out that one would really desire to see included in the book. We have no doubt but that his MODERN ELOCUTIONIST will be *the* one selected above all others by aspiring readers, whether for public or private use."—*The Limerick Chronicle*.

"The purchaser of this reasonably-sized volume will not only possess a treasury of fresh extracts from some of the best modern writers, well worth acquiring, but will be saved the trouble of searching for suitable matter for private or public readings, besides having the advantage of concise but judicious directions on the management of the voice and action in recitation, in a brief but valuable Introduction."—*The Limerick Reporter*.

LIVERPOOL.

"This volume, which is dedicated to the Duchess of Marlborough, is singularly free from elocutionary readings, which, however excellent in themselves, have become wearisome by constant repetition. Those, therefore, who are on the outlook for a selection of fresh pieces for recitation, will find an abundant supply here 'from grave to gay, from lively to severe.' All public speakers, and particularly those who are only beginning to learn the art, ought to be very thankful to Mr. Jennings for his brief but admirable Introduction—his 'hints to readers' in which are well fitted to be of much practical utility.

Among many books of a similar character, this volume is entitled to a high place, and if carefully studied will do much to help many a young man to read and speak well."—*The Liverpool Mercury*.

A SELECTION FROM THE OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

MONTREAL.

"The author of this work, who is a clergyman of the Irish (Episcopal) Church, was formerly engaged in the teaching of elocution in the city of Dublin. He was also accustomed, during his leisure hours, to give public 'readings,' and this employment necessarily drew his attention to the writings of the best authors which were adapted for recitation. His success in selection suggested to those of his friends who were themselves teachers of the same art or were directly or indirectly interested in it that Mr. Jennings would be just the person to compile a manual containing passages well adapted for delivery in public, but not as yet hackneyed by long repetition. With diffidence, aware that many such hand-books already existed, he consented, and the favourable reception accorded to the volume in England and Scotland as well as in Ireland, is evidence that it supplied a felt want. In little more than a year the first edition—a large one—was exhausted and in the second one called for by the popular demand, the author has taken care to avail himself of the counsel given by some of his reviewers and also to make some improvements and additions of his own. The great merit of the work—as already intimated—is its freshness of selection. As he points out in the introduction, it is well known that novelty is a very essential element with audiences, and unless a reader or reciter has extraordinary power by voice and action to impress the minds of his hearers, constant repetition is sure to become wearisome. His classification consists of four divisions, of which the first comprises serious and pathetic selections in prose and poetry, such as appeal to the social and domestic affections. The poetical portion of these divisions is the most numerous and varied in the book. The second division includes humorous selections in prose and poetry; the third, selections from the works of the best dramatists except Shakspeare, and the fourth, those taken from Shakspeare's plays. With regard to the latter, Mr. Jennings has followed the order suggested by Professor Dowden in his admirable study on Shakspeare's mind and art. A supplementary part comprises a large number of additional selections, both serious and humorous. Owing to the refusal of Tennyson's publishers to allow him to print the passages from the Poet Laureate on which he had fixed, he has been left to the resource of recommending the extracts from his works which he considers suitable for reading aloud. Some hints to the student as to the management of the voice, facial expression, &c., will be found valuable. The book is clearly printed in good type and plainly but neatly bound, and we can cordially recommend it to Canadian students of a most important art."—*The Gazette*.

TORONTO.

"This work is dedicated to the Duchess of Marlborough, wife of the ex-Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. The author is a teacher of elocution and a popular reader in Dublin: he therefore ought to bring to the work of selecting pieces for readings a trained intelligence and good judgment. He set before himself one rule which has its disadvantages as well as its advantages—viz., to avoid so far as possible the quoting of such pieces, however good, as were hackneyed; and as this excluded a very large number of valuable readings, the task was obviously difficult; but it has been admirably fulfilled. The book (which we may say has two advantages—it is very well printed, and it is bound so that it opens easily at any given place) is divided into four original parts and two additional sections, which form the excuse, the justification, for the new edition. The pieces are arranged according to their character, beginning with serious and pathetic selections in prose; these are followed by poetical selections of the same character in great number. Another section is devoted to humorous selections in prose and verse. The third and fourth sections are devoted to dramatic selections, the latter given up entirely to Shakspeare. The unhackneyed selections are from Lamb, De Quincey, Hans Andersen, Burritt, Carlyle, Bret Harte, Frederick Locker, Hamilton Aide, Robert Browning, J. F. Trowbridge, Matthew Arnold, Archbishop Trench, Father Prout, James Clarence Mangan, Russell Lowell, O. W. Holmes, Douglas Jerrold, and other well-known, but still quite unhackneyed, names. The quotations and adaptations in the additional parts are excellently done, those from Samuel Lover being particularly acceptable. The volume, indeed, has the merit of being a fine collection of literary selections for general reading, and as such alone would have a splendid field of popularity. A double index of authors and subjects adds to the value of the book, as a means of ready reference."—*Toronto Mail*.

CONTENTS.



[Selections marked thus (†) appear for the first time, in the present Edition, being either substitutions or additions.]

	Page
DEDICATION, - - - - -	iii
PREFACE, - - - - -	v
INTRODUCTION, - - - - -	xiii
THE VALUE OF WORDS IN MODERN ENGLISH VERSE, -	xxiv

DIVISION I.—SERIOUS, PATHETIC, &c.

PART I.—PROSE.

The Death of Jo, - - -	<i>Charles Dickens,</i>	1
Early Scenes Re-visited, - - -	<i>Charles Lamb,</i>	5
One Niche the Highest, - - -	<i>Elihu Burritt,</i>	8
The Mother and her Dead Child, -	<i>Hans Andersen,</i>	12
† Noble Revenge, - - -	<i>De Quincey,</i>	18
† A City by Night, - - -	<i>Thomas Carlyle,</i>	20
† The Drunkard's Death, - - -	<i>Charles Dickens,</i>	22
The Widow and her Son, - - -	<i>Charles Dickens,</i>	23
The Poetry of City and Country Life, -	<i>H. W. Longfellow,</i>	26
The Three Cherry-stones, - - -	<i>Anonymous,</i>	27
The Death of Little Nell, - - -	<i>Charles Dickens,</i>	31

PART II.—POETRY.

The Cry of the Children, - - -	<i>Eliz. B. Browning,</i>	40
First Love, - - -	<i>Edward Dowden,</i>	45
A Wish, - - -	<i>Frederick Locker,</i>	47
Hally's Flower, - - -	<i>Samuel K. Cowan,</i>	48
The Boat-race, - - -	<i>W. C. Bennett,</i>	51
Love-Letter, - - -	<i>W. Wilkins,</i>	56
Wedding Bells, - - -	<i>Charlotte M. Griggs,</i>	60
The Dream of Eugene Aram, - - -	<i>Thomas Hood,</i>	64
In the Tunnel, - - -	<i>Bret Harte,</i>	71
In the Engine-shed, - - -	<i>W. Wilkins,</i>	73
The Old Familiar Faces, - - -	<i>Charles Lamb,</i>	77
The Children's Hour, - - -	<i>H. W. Longfellow,</i>	78
From India, - - -	<i>W. C. Bennett,</i>	80
Lost and Found, - - -	<i>Hamilton Aidé,</i>	82

	Page
Poor Jack, - - - -	<i>Samuel K. Cowan</i> , - 85
The Raven, - - - -	<i>Edgar A. Poe</i> , - 91
“How they brought the Good News from Ghent,” - - - -	<i>Robert Browning</i> , - 96
Bingen on the Rhine, - - - -	<i>Hon. Mrs. Norton</i> , - 98
The Children, - - - -	<i>Charles Dickens</i> , - 101
The Dirty Old Man, - - - -	<i>William Allingham</i> , - 103
Lost on the Shore, - - - -	<i>Holme Lee</i> , - 106
The Diver, - - - -	<i>Schiller</i> , - 110
A Greyport Legend, - - - -	<i>Bret Harte</i> , - 116
On the Landing, - - - -	<i>Bret Harte</i> , - 117
The Baron's Last Banquet, - - - -	<i>Albert G. Greene</i> , - 119
The Lament of the Irish Emigrant, - - - -	<i>Lady Dufferin</i> , - 121
On the Receipt of my Mother's Picture, - - - -	<i>William Cowper</i> , - 123
A Ballad of War, - - - -	<i>M. B. Smedley</i> , - 127
Horatius—an extract, - - - -	<i>Lord Macaulay</i> , - 129
Baby May, - - - -	<i>W. C. Bennett</i> , - 132
Baby Bell, - - - -	<i>T. B. Aldrich</i> , - 134
Measuring the Baby, - - - -	<i>Anonymous</i> , - 137
Bessie and I.—Part I., - - - -	<i>Edwin Collier</i> , - 139
Bessie and I.—Part II., - - - -	<i>Edwin Collier</i> , - 148
In the Mirror, - - - -	<i>Samuel K. Cowan</i> , - 158
Annabel Lee, - - - -	<i>Edgar A. Poe</i> , - 160
The Orphan's Dream of Christmas, - - - -	<i>Mrs. M'Intosh</i> , - 161
Beautiful Snow, - - - -	<i>Anonymous</i> , - 166
The Vagabonds, - - - -	<i>J. T. Trowbridge</i> , - 168
Poor Little Joe, - - - -	<i>Peleg Arkwright</i> , - 172
The Newsboy's Debt, - - - -	<i>Anonymous</i> , - 174
Betsey and I are out, - - - -	<i>Will Carleton</i> , - 179
How Betsey and I made up, - - - -	<i>Will Carleton</i> , - 182
The Haunted Mere, - - - -	<i>Holme Lee</i> , - 185
Not One to Spare, - - - -	<i>Anonymous</i> , - 187
† In the Cathedral Close, - - - -	<i>Edward Dowden</i> , - 190
† Flowers, - - - -	<i>John A. Jennings</i> , - 191
† Requiesscat, - - - -	<i>Matthew Arnold</i> , - 192
My Child, - - - -	<i>John Pierpoint</i> , - 192
The Legend Beautiful, - - - -	<i>H. W. Longfellow</i> , - 194
The Leper, - - - -	<i>N. P. Willis</i> , - 199
† The Day is Done, - - - -	<i>H. W. Longfellow</i> , - 204
† The Alma, - - - -	<i>Archbishop Trench</i> , - 205

	Page
† The Law of Love, - - -	Archbishop Trench, - 206
† Sea-mews in Winter-time, - - -	Jean Ingelow, - 207
† Major and Minor, - - -	George W. Curtis, - 209
The Boys, - - -	O. W. Holmes, - 209
Poor People, - - -	Victor Hugo, - 211
† The Arsenal at Springfield, - - -	H. W. Longfellow, - 217
† Alone, - - -	William Wordsworth, - 219
Abou Ben Adhem and the Angel, - - -	H. W. Longfellow, - 220
The Bells, - - -	Edgar A. Poe, - 220
The Battle of the Lake Regillus, - - -	Lord Macaulay, - 224
Out of the Old House, Nancy, - - -	Will Carleton, - 228
The Relief of Lucknow, - - -	R. T. S. Lowell, - 231
† Behind the Mask, - - -	Adeline D. T. Whitney, 234
The Old Sergeant, - - -	Byron F. Willson, - 235
The Sparrow at Sea, - - -	E. A. Allen, - 240
Killed at the Ford, - - -	H. W. Longfellow, - 242
Becalmed, - - -	Samuel K. Cowan, - 243
Dickens in Camp, - - -	Bret Harte, - 247
Cowper's Grave, - - -	Eliz. B. Browning, - 248
Left Alone at Eighty, - - -	A. R., - 251
A Dream, - - -	William Allingham, - 253
Sheridan's Ride, - - -	T. B. Reed, - 254
The Outlaw, - - -	Mrs. Henderson, - 256
Barbara Frietchie, - - -	John G. Whittier, - 259
The Opening of the Piano, - - -	O. W. Holmes, - 261
After the Accident, - - -	Bret Harte, - 262
Not in the Programme, - - -	Edwin Collier, - 264
The Parting of Marmion and Douglas, - - -	Walter Scott, - 273
† Twenty Golden Years Ago, - - -	James Clarence Mangan, 275
† My Grave, - - -	Thomas Davis, - 277
† The Bells of Shandon, - - -	Francis Mahony, - 278
† The First Snowfall, - - -	James R Lowell, - 280
The Voiceless, - - -	O. W. Holmes, - 282
Song to Mary, - - -	C. Wolfe, - 282
I remember, - - -	Thomas Hood, - 283
Life, - - -	Samuel K. Cowan, - 285
Rest, - - -	John A. Jennings, - 285
† The Last Scene, - - -	William Winter, - 286

DIVISION II.—HUMOROUS.

PART I.—PROSE.

	Page
The Charity Dinner, - - - <i>Litchfield Moseley,</i>	- 287
Copperfield and the Waiter, - - - <i>Charles Dickens,</i>	- 295
European Guides, - - - <i>Mark Twain,</i>	- 300
A Curtain Lecture, - - - <i>Douglas Jerrold,</i>	- 304
High Art—Music, - - - <i>Max Adeler,</i>	- 308
I Vant to Fly, - - - <i>Anonymous,</i>	- 310
The Bouquet, - - - <i>John Habberton,</i>	- 312
Aurelia's Unfortunate Young Man, - <i>Mark Twain,</i>	- 318
† The Parlour Orator, - - - <i>Charles Dickens,</i>	- 321
Concerning Chambermaids, - - - <i>Mark Twain,</i>	- 325
The Difficulty about that Dog, - - - <i>Anonymous,</i>	- 327
Cheap Jacks and Dear Jacks, - - - <i>Charles Dickens,</i>	- 332
Mrs. Mayton Interviewed, - - - <i>John Habberton,</i>	- 335
The Duties of a Secretary, - - - <i>Charles Dickens,</i>	- 339

PART II.—POETRY.

The Pied Piper of Hamelin, - - - <i>Robert Browning,</i>	- 345
Nothing to Wear, - - - <i>William A. Butler,</i>	354
The Walrus and the Carpenter, - - - <i>Lewis Carroll,</i>	- 361
Domestic Asides, - - - <i>Thomas Hood,</i>	- 364
The General Post Office, - - - <i>Edwin Hamilton,</i>	- 366
Human Nature, - - - <i>Anonymous,</i>	- 368
The Enchanted Shirt, - - - <i>John Hay,</i>	- 370
† The Sword of Damocles, - - - <i>Henry S. Leigh,</i>	- 372
† A Touch of Nature, - - - <i>Mrs. Hewett,</i>	- 373
A Sea Dirge, - - - <i>Anonymous,</i>	- 374
Father William, - - - <i>Lewis Carroll,</i>	- 376
A-sitting on a Gate, - - - <i>Lewis Carroll,</i>	- 377
The Declaration, - - - <i>N. P. Willis,</i>	- 380
The Demon Ship, - - - <i>Thomas Hood,</i>	- 381

DIVISION III.—DRAMATIC.

SELECTIONS FROM

Richelieu, - - - <i>Lord Lytton,</i>	- 385
William Tell, - - - <i>Sheridan Knowles,</i>	- 390
The School for Scandal, - - - <i>Richard B. Sheridan,</i>	- 394

	Page
The Rivals. No. I., - - - <i>Richard B. Sheridan,</i>	- 398
The Rivals. No. II., - - - <i>Richard B. Sheridan,</i>	- 402
She Stoops to Conquer, - - - <i>Oliver Goldsmith,</i>	- 404

DIVISION IV.—SHAKSPERE.

Richard III.—Act I., Scene IV., - - -	- 409
King John—Act III., Scene III., - - -	- 411
King John—Act IV., Scene I., - - -	- 413
King Henry IV. (Part II.)—Act III., Scene I., - - -	- 418
King Henry V.—Act III., Scene I., - - -	- 419
King Henry V.—Act IV., Scene III., - - -	- 420
As You Like It—Act III., Scene II., - - -	- 422
Hamlet—Act I., Scene II., - - -	- 426
Hamlet—Act III., Scene II., - - -	- 431
Othello—Act I., Scene III., - - -	- 432
King Lear—Act II., Scene IV., - - -	- 434
Macbeth—Act II., Scenes I. and II., - - -	- 437
The Tempest—Act IV., Scene I., - - -	- 443

ADDITIONAL SELECTIONS—PROSE.

ADAPTATIONS AND CONDENSATIONS.

† Paddy the Piper, - - - <i>Samuel Lover,</i>	- 445
† Mrs. Corney makes Tea, - - - <i>Charles Dickens,</i>	- 451
† Love in a Balloon, - - - <i>Anonymous,</i>	- 456
† O'Dempsey and the Duke, - - - <i>Samuel Lover,</i>	- 460
† The Four Sisters, - - - <i>Charles Dickens,</i>	- 462
† The Present to the Priest, - - - <i>Samuel Lover,</i>	- 465
† Skating Experiences, - - - <i>Charles Dickens,</i>	- 472

ADDITIONAL SELECTIONS—POETRY.

SERIOUS AND HUMOROUS.

† Balaklava, - - - <i>Archbishop Trench,</i>	- 477
† Ode to the North-East Wind, - - - <i>Charles Kingsley,</i>	- 478
† Footsteps of Angels, - - - <i>H. W. Longfellow,</i>	- 480

	Page
† Love's Divinity, - <i>Author of "Mrs. Jerningham's Journal,"</i>	480
† In School-days, - - - <i>J. G. Whittier, -</i>	483
† The Sands of Dee, - - - <i>Charles Kingsley, -</i>	484
† The Forsaken Merman, - - - <i>Matthew Arnold, -</i>	484
† Heroes—(I.), - - - <i>B., - - -</i>	488
† Children, - - - <i>H. W. Longfellow, -</i>	491
† The Day of the Lord, - - - <i>Charles Kingsley, -</i>	492
† Coming, - - - <i>B. M., - - -</i>	493
† The Old Man Dreams, - - - <i>O. W. Holmes, -</i>	496
† The Owl Critic, - - - <i>James T. Fields, -</i>	497
† A Prologue, - - - <i>O. W. Holmes, -</i>	499
† The Twins, - - - <i>Henry S. Leigh, -</i>	501
† Heroes—(II.), - - - <i>Anonymous, -</i>	502
† The German March, - - - <i>Charles Casey, -</i>	504
† Tired Mothers, - - - <i>Anonymous, -</i>	505
† Little Pat and the Parson, - - - <i>A., - - -</i>	506
† The Doorstep, - - - <i>Edmund C. Stedman, -</i>	508
† Death-doomed, - - - <i>Will Carleton, -</i>	509
† The Old Clock on the Stairs, - - - <i>H. W. Longfellow, -</i>	511
NOTES, - - - - -	513
INDEX OF AUTHORS AND SUBJECTS, - - - -	517

hears the hum of new and numerous voices both above and below. He can just distinguish the tones of his father, who is shouting with all the energy of despair,—“William! William! don’t look down! Your mother, and Henry, and Harriet, are all here praying for you! Don’t look down! Keep your eye towards the top!” The boy didn’t look down. His eye is fixed like a flint towards heaven, and his young heart on Him who reigns there. He grasps again his knife. He cuts another niche, and another foot is added to the hundreds that remove him from the reach of human help from below. How carefully he uses his wasting blade? How anxiously he selects the softest places in that vast pier! How he avoids every flinty grain! How he economises his physical powers, resting a moment at each gain he cuts. How every motion is watched from below! There stand his father, mother, brother, and sister, on the very spot, where if he falls, he will not fall alone.

The sun is half-way down in the west. The lad has made fifty additional niches in that mighty wall, and now finds himself directly under the middle of that vast arch of rock, earth, and trees. He must cut his way in a new direction, to get from this overhanging mountain. The inspiration of hope is in his bosom; its vital heat is fed by the increasing shouts of hundreds perched upon cliffs, trees, and others who stand with ropes in their hands upon the bridge above, or with ladders below. Fifty more gains must be cut before the longest rope can reach him. His wasting blade strikes again into the limestone. The boy is emerging painfully foot by foot from under that lofty arch. Spliced ropes are in the hands of those who are leaning over the outer edge of the bridge. Two minutes more, and all will be over. That blade is worn to the last half-inch. The boy’s head reels; his eyes are starting from their sockets. His last hope is dying in his heart, his life must hang upon the next gain he

THE POETRY OF CITY AND COUNTRY LIFE.

Where should the scholar live? In solitude, or in society? In the green stillness of the country, where he can hear the heart of Nature beat; or in the dark, gray city, where he can hear and feel the throbbing heart of man? I will make answer for him, and say, in the dark, gray city. Oh, they do greatly err who think that the stars are all the poetry which cities have; and therefore, that the poet's only dwelling should be in sylvan solitudes, under the green roof of trees. Beautiful, no doubt, are all the forms of Nature, when transfigured by the miraculous power of poetry; hamlets and harvest fields, and nut-brown waters flowing ever under the forest vast and shadowy, with all the sights and sounds of rural life. But, after all, what are these but the decorations and painted scenery in the great theatre of human life? What are they but the coarse materials of the poet's song? Glorious, indeed, is the world of God around us—but more glorious the world of God within us. There lies the land of song; there lies the poet's native land. The river of life, that flows through streets tumultuous, bearing along so many gallant hearts, so many wrecks of humanity; the many homes and households, each a little world in itself, revolving round its fireside, as a central sun; all forms of human joy and suffering, brought into that narrow compass; and to be in this and be a part of this; acting, thinking, rejoicing, sorrowing with his fellow-men—such, such should be the poet's life. If he would describe the world, he should live in the world. The mind of the scholar, also, if you would have it large and liberal, should come in contact with other minds. It is better that his armour should be somewhat bruised even by rude encounters, than hang for ever rusting on the wall. Nor will his themes be few or trivial, because apparently shut-in between the walls of houses, and having merely the

Specimen Page.

THE MODERN ELOCUTIONIST.

83

The dry and embalming air of the mine
Had arrested the natural hand of decay,
Nor faded the flesh, nor dimmed a line.

Who was he, then? No man could say
When the passage had suddenly fallen in—
Its memory, even, was past away!

In their great rough arms, begrimed with coal,
They took him up, as a tender lass
Will carry a babe, from that darksome hole,

To the outer world of the short warm grass.
Then up spoke one, "Let us send for Bess,
She is seventy-nine, come Martinmas :

Older than anyone here, I guess!
Belike, she may mind when the wall fell there,
And remember the chap by his comeliness."

So they brought old Bess with her silver hair,
To the side of the hill, where the dead man lay,
Ere the flesh had crumbled in outer air.

And the crowd around him all gave way,
As with tottering steps old Bess drew nigh,
And bent o'er the face of the unchanged clay.

Then suddenly rang a sharp low cry!
Bess sank on her knees, and wildly toss'd
Her wither'd arms in the summer sky. .

"O Willie! Willie! my lad! my lost!
The Lord be praised! after sixty years.
I see you again! The tears you cost,

"O Willie, darlin', were bitter tears!
They never looked for ye underground,
They told me a tale to mock my fears!

Specimen Page.

233

THE MODERN ELOCUTIONIST.

“*The Highlanders !* Oh! dinna ye hear
The slogan far awa—
The McGregor’s? Ah! I ken it weel;
It’s the grandest o’ them a’.

“God bless thae bonny Highlanders!
We’re saved! we’re saved!” she cried:
And fell on her knees, and thanks to God
Pour’d forth, like a full flood-tide.

Along the battery-line her cry
Had fallen among the men:
And they started, for they were there to die:
Was life so near them then?

They listen’d, for life: and the rattling fire
Far off, and the far-off roar
Were all:—and the colonel shook his head,
And they turn’d to their guns once more.

Then Jessie said—“That slogan’s dune;
But can ye no hear them, noc,—
The Campbells are comin’ ? It’s no a dream;
Our succours hae broken through!”

We heard the roar and the rattle afar,
But the pipes we could not hear;
So the men plied their work of hopeless war,
And knew that the end was near.

It was not long ere it must be heard,—
A shrilling ceaseless sound:
It was no noise of the strife afar,
Or the sappers underground.

For it shone like solid sunshine ; and a winding stair of light
Wound around it and around it till it wound clear out of
sight !

“ And behold, as I approach’d it—with a rapt and dazzled
stare,—
Thinking that I saw old comrades just ascending the great
Stair,—
Suddenly the solemn challenge broke of—‘Halt and who
goes there?’
‘I’m a friend,’ I said, ‘if you are.’ ‘Then advance, sir, to
the Stair!’

“I advanced!—That sentry, Doctor! was Elijah Ballantyne!—
First of all to fall on Monday, after we had form’d the line!—
‘Welcome, my old Sergeant! welcome! Welcome by that
countersign!’
And he pointed to the scar there, under this old cloak of
mine!

“As he grasp’d my hand I shudder’d, thinking only of the
grave;
But he smiled and pointed upward with a bright and blood-
less glaive;
‘That’s the way, sir! to Head-quarters,’—‘What Head-
quarters?’ ‘Of the Brave.’
‘But the great Tower?’—‘That’—he answer’d—‘is the
way, sir! of the Brave!’—

“Then a sudden shame came o’er me at his uniform of light;
At my own so old and tatter’d, and at his so new and bright;
‘Ah!’ said he—‘you have forgotten the New Uniform
to-night,—
Hurry back, for you must be here at just twelve o’clock
to-night!’

Specimen Page.

112

THE MODERN ELOCUTIONIST.

All was still on the height, save the murmur that went
From the grave of the deep, sounding hollow and fell,
Or save when the tremulous sighing lament
Thrilled from lip unto lip, "Gallant youth, fare thee well!"
More hollow and more wails the deep on the ear—
More dread and more dread grows suspense in its fear.

If thou shouldst in those waters thy diadem fling,
And cry, "Who may find it shall win it and wear;"
God wot, though the prize were the crown of a king,
A crown at such hazard were valued too dear.
For never shall lips of the living reveal
What the deeps that howl yonder in terror conceal.

Oh, many a bark to that breast grappled fast,
Has gone down to the fearful and fathomless grave;
Again, crashed together the keel and the mast,
To be seen tossed aloft in the glee of the wave!
Like the growth of a storm ever louder and clearer,
Grows the roar of the gulf rising nearer and nearer.

And it bubbles and seethes, and it hisses and roars,
As when fire is with water commixed and contending;
And the spray of its wrath to the welkin up-soars,
And flood upon flood hurries on, never ending,
And as with the swell of the far thunder-boom,
Rushes roaringly forth from the heart of the gloom.

And lo! from the heart of that far-floating gloom,
Like the wing of the cygnet—what gleams on the sea?
Lo! an arm and a neck glancing up from the tomb!
Steering stalwart and shoreward. O joy, it is he!
The left hand is lifted in triumph; behold,
It waves as a trophy the goblet of gold!

hand, put it to his lips and played "Sweet Spirit, Hear my Prayer," as easily as if he were singing. He said that what I needed was to fix my mouth properly, and he showed me how.

After working for three more afternoons in the garret the horn at last made a sound. But it was not a cheering noise; it reminded me forcibly of the groans uttered by Butterwick's horse when it was dying last November. The harder I blew, the more mournful became the noise, and that was the only note I could get. When I went down to supper, Mrs. A. asked me if I heard that awful groaning. She said she guessed it came from Twiddler's cow, for she heard Mrs. Twiddler say yesterday that the cow was sick.

For four weeks I could get nothing out of that horn but blood-curdling groans; and, meantime, the people over the way moved to another house because our neighbourhood was haunted, and three of our hired girls resigned successively for the same reason.

Finally, a man whom I consulted told me that "No One to Love" was an easy tune for beginners; and I made an effort to learn it.

After three weeks of arduous practice, during which Mrs. A. several times suggested that it was brutal that Twiddler didn't kill that suffering cow and put it out of its misery, I conquered the first three notes; but there I stuck. I could play "No One to——" and that was all. I performed "No One to——" over eight thousand times; and as it seemed unlikely that I would ever learn the whole tune, I determined to try the effect of part of it on Mrs. A. About ten o'clock one night I crept out to the front of the house and struck up. First, "No One to——" about fifteen or twenty times, then a few of those groans, then more of the tune, and so forth. Then Butterwick set his dog on me, and I suddenly went into the house. Mrs. A. had the children in the back room,

Specimen Page.

180

THE MODERN ELOCUTIONIST.

And so that bowl kept pourin' dissensions in our cup ;
And so that blamed cow-creature was always a-comin' up ;
And so that heaven we arg'ed no nearer to us got,
But it gave us a taste of something a thousand times as hot.

And so the thing kept workin', and all the self-same way ;
Always somethin' to arg'e, and somethin' sharp to say ;
And down on us came the neighbours, a couple dozen strong,
And lent their kindest sarvice for to help the thing along.

And there has been days together—and many a weary
week—
We was both of us cross and spunky, and both too proud to
speak ;
And I have been thinkin' and thinkin', the whole of the
winter and fall,
If I can't live kind with a woman, why, then, I won't at all.

And so I have talked with Betsey, and Betsey has talked
with me,
And we have agreed together that we can't never agree ;
And what is hers shall be hers, and what is mine shall be
mine ;
And I'll put it in the agreement, and take it to her to sign.

Write on the paper, lawyer—the very first paragraph—
Of all the farm and live-stock that she shall have her half ;
For she has helped to earn it, through many a weary day,
And it's nothing more than justice that Betsey has her pay.

Give her the house and homestead—a man can thrive and
roam ;
But women are skeery critters, unless they have a home ;
And I have always determined, and never failed to say,
That Betsey should never want a home if I was taken away.

THE ENCHANTED SHIRT.

The King was sick. His cheek was red,
And his eye was clear and bright;
He ate and drank with a kingly zest,
And peacefully snored at night.

But he said he was sick, and a king should know,
And doctors came by the score,
They did not cure him. He cut off their heads,
And sent to the schools for more.

At last two famous doctors came,
And one was as poor as a rat,—
He had passed his life in studious toil,
And never found time to grow fat.

The other ~~had~~ never looked in a book;
His patients gave him no trouble:
If they recovered, they paid him well;
If they died, their heirs paid double.

Together they looked at the royal tongue,
As the King on his couch reclined;
In succession they thumped his august chest,
But no trace of disease could find.

The old sage said, "You're as sound as a nut."
"Hang him up," roared the King in a gale—
In a ten-knot gale of royal rage;
The other leech grew a shade pale;

But he pensively rubbed his sagacious nose,
And thus his prescription ran—
*The King will be well, if he sleeps one night
In the Shirt of a Happy Man.*

forth from a circulating library; she had a book in each hand; they were half-bound volumes with marble covers; from that moment I guessed how full of duty I should see her mistress.

Mrs. M. Those are vile places, indeed.

Sir Anth. Madam, a circulating library in a town is as an evergreen tree of diabolical knowledge; it blossoms through the year. And, depend on it, Mrs. Malaprop, that they who are so fond of handling the leaves, will long for the fruit at last.

Mrs. M. Fie, fie! Sir Anthony! you surely speak laconically.

Sir Anth. Why, Mrs. Malaprop, in moderation, now, what would you have a woman know?

Mrs. M. Observe me, Sir Anthony, I would by no means wish a daughter of mine to be a progeny of learning; I don't think so much learning becomes a young woman: for instance, I would never let her meddle with Greek, or Hebrew, or algebra, or simony, or fluxions, or paradoxes, or such inflammatory branches of learning; nor will it be necessary for her to handle any of your mathematical, astronomical, diabolical instruments; but, Sir Anthony, I would send her, at nine years old, to a boarding-school, in order to learn a little ingenuity and artifice: then, sir, she would have a supercilious knowledge in accounts; and, as she grew up, I would have her instructed in geometry, that she might know something of the contagious countries: this, Sir Anthony, is what I would have a woman know; and I don't think there is a superstitious article in it.

Sir Anth. Well, well, Mrs. Malaprop, I will dispute the point no further with you; though I must confess, that you are a truly moderate and polite arguer, for almost every third word you say is on my side of the question. But,

ADDITIONAL SELECTIONS—PROSE.

ADAPTATIONS AND CONDENSATIONS.

PADDY THE PIPER.

An Irish peasant relates the following story in the richest brogue, and most dramatic manner :—

“ ‘Twas afther nightfall, and we wor sittin’ round the fire, and the praties wor boilin’, and the noggins of butthermilk was standin’ ready for our suppers, whin a nock kem to the door.

“ ‘Whisht!’ says my father, ‘here’s the sojers come upon us now,’ says he; ‘the villians! I’m afeared they seen a glimmer of the fire through the crack in the door,’ says he.

“ ‘No,’ says my mother, ‘for I’m afther hangin’ an owld sack and my new petticoat agin it a while ago.’

“ ‘Well, whisht, anyhow,’ says my father, ‘for there’s a knock agin;’ and we all held our tongues till another thump kem to the door.

“ ‘Oh, it’s a folly to purtind any more,’ says my father—‘they’re too cute to be put off that a-way,’ says he. ‘Go, Shamus,’ says he to me, ‘and see who’s in it.’

“ ‘How can I see who’s in it in the dark?’ says I.

“ ‘Well,’ says he, ‘light the candle thin, and see who’s in it, but don’t open the door, for your life, barrin’ they brake it in,’ says he, ‘exceptin’ to the sojers, and spake thim fair, if it’s thim.’

“ ‘So with that I wint to the door, and there was another knock.

“ ‘Who’s there?’ says I.

“ ‘It’s me,’ says he.

“ ‘Who are you,’ says I.

“ ‘A frind,’ says he.

“ ‘*Baithershin*,’ says I,—‘who are you at all?’

“ ‘Arrah! don’t you know me?’ says he.

“ ‘Sorra a taste,’ says I.

“ ‘Sure I’m Paddy the Piper,’ says he.

Specimen Page.

507

THE MODERN ELOCUTIONIST.

He scolds at the people who sit in the pews,—
Pat takes them for kings and princesses.
(With his little bare feet—he delights in their shoes :
In his rags—he feels proud of their dresses !)

The Parson exhorts them to think of their need,
To turn from the world's dissipation,
The naked to clothe and the hungry to feed,—
Pat listens with strong approbation !
And when the old clergyman walks down the aisle,
Pat runs up to meet him right gladly,
"Shure, give me my dinner," says he with a smile,
"And a jacket,—I want them quite badly !"

The kings and princesses indignantly stare,
The beadle gets word of the danger,
And, shaking his silver-tipp'd stick in the air,
Looks knives at the poor little stranger.
But Pat's not afraid, he is sparkling with joy,
And cries—who so willing to cry it ?—
"You'll give me my dinner—I'm *suck* a poor boy :
You said so—now *don't* you deny it !"

The pompous old beadle may grumble and glare,
And growl about robbers and arson ;
But the boy who has faith in the sermon stands there,
And smiles at the white-headed Parson !
The kings and princesses may wonder and frown,
And whisper he wants better teaching ;
But the white-headed Parson looks tenderly down
On the boy who has faith in his preaching.

He takes him away without question or blame,
As eager as Patsy to press on,
For he thinks a good dinner (and Pat thinks the same)
Is the moral that lies in the lesson.
And after long years, when Pat, handsomely drest—
A smart footman—is asked to determine
Of all earthly things what's the thing he likes best,
He says, "Och ! shure, the master's ould sermin !"

A.

[From "Poems written for a Child."—By kind permission of the author.]

All this time, Mr. Winkle, with his face and hands blue with the cold, had been forcing a gimlet into the soles of his feet, and putting his skates on, with the points behind, and getting the straps into a very complicated and entangled state, with the assistance of Mr. Snodgrass, who knew rather less about skates than a Hindoo. At length, however, with the assistance of Mr. Weller, the unfortunate skates were firmly screwed and buckled on, and Mr. Winkle was raised to his feet.

"Now, then, sir," said Sam, in an encouraging tone; "off with you, and show 'em how to do it."

"Stop, Sam, stop!" said Mr. Winkle, trembling violently, and clutching hold of Sam's arms with the grasp of a drowning man. "How slippery it is, Sam!"

"Not an uncommon thing upon ice, sir," replied Mr. Weller. "Hold up, sir!"

This last observation of Mr. Weller's bore reference to a demonstration Mr. Winkle made at the instant, of a frantic desire to throw his feet in the air, and dash the back of his head on the ice.

"These—these—are very awkward skates; ain't they, Sam?" inquired Mr. Winkle, staggering.

"I'm afeerd there's a orkard gen'l'm'n in 'em, sir," replied Sam.

"Now, Winkle," cried Mr. Pickwick, quite unconscious that there was anything the matter. "Come; the ladies are all anxiety."

"Yes, yes," replied Mr. Winkle, with a ghastly smile. "I'm coming."

"Just a goin' to begin," said Sam, endeavouring to disengage himself. "Now, sir, start off!"

"Stop an instant, Sam," gasped Mr. Winkle, clinging most affectionately to Mr. Weller. "I find I've got a couple of coats at home that I don't want, Sam. You may have them, Sam."

"Thank'ee, sir," replied Mr. Weller.

"Never mind touching your hat, Sam," said Mr. Winkle, hastily. "You needn't take your hand away to do that. I meant to have given you five shillings this morning for a Christmas-box, Sam. I'll give it you this afternoon, Sam."

"You're very good, sir," replied Mr. Weller.

"Just hold me at first, Sam; will you?" said Mr. Winkle. "There—that's right. I shall soon get in the way of it, Sam. Not too fast, Sam; not too fast."

Mr. Winkle stooping forward, with his body half doubled up, was being assisted over the ice by Mr. Weller, in a very singular and un-swan-like manner, when Mr. Pickwick most innocently shouted from the opposite bank:

When clear falls the moonlight,
When spring-tides are low ;
When sweet airs come seaward
From heaths starr'd with broom.
And high rocks throw mildly
On the blanch'd sands a gloom ;
Up the still, glistening beaches,
Up the creeks we will hie,
Over banks of bright seaweed
The ebb-tide leaves dry.
We will gaze, from the sand-hills,
At the white, sleeping town ;
At the church on the hill-side—
And then come back down.
Singing : "There dwells a loved one,
But cruel is she !
She left lonely for ever
The kings of the sea."

MATTHEW ARNOLD

[By kind permission of the author.]

HEROES.—(I.)

Children, when you sat wishing,
Down last night on the sands,
Beckoning moments of glory,
With little helpless hands,
I heard you saying and sighing,
As the wind went over the seas,
"There never will come knights errant
To common days like these !"

I heard you sighing and saying,
"The beautiful time is gone
When heroes hunted for monsters,
And conquer'd them one by one ;
And now there is nothing noble,
And we all lie safe at night,
But we would not mind a monster
If we could have a knight !"

GAZE'S Circular Tours in Ireland.

~~~~~  
**Agents for Ireland—**

**CARSON BROTHERS,  
7 GRAFTON-STREET, DUBLIN.**  
~~~~~

IRELAND.—COUNTY WICKLOW.

Tours through the County Wicklow, comprising the picturesque and romantic scenery of Bray and its vicinity, the Dargle, Enniskerry, Powerscourt, Demesne and Waterfall, Sugar Loaf Mountain, Rocky Valley, Hollybrook, Wooden Bridge, the beautiful Vale of Avoca, The Meeting of the Waters, Castle Howard, Rathdrum, the Vales of Clara and Laragh, the Seven Churches, Glendalough, Ancient Roman Tower and Lake, the Devil's Glen, Rathnew, County Town of Wicklow, returning by Bray, Killiney, Kingstown, &c. Inclusive terms from Dublin and back, with Hotel Accommodation, including dinner, bed, and meat breakfast at Bray and Rathdrum, with attendance, and comprising first-class railway and car travelling, as stated in above itinerary (wine, ale, &c, not included) :—

For Parties of Four Persons and upwards, 38s. each.

Three	42s.
Two	45s.

COUNTY DOWN CIRCULAR TOUR, No. 1.

Comprising the interesting and romantic scenery of Rostrevor, Carlingford Lough, and the Mourne Mountain District. The Route skirts the base of the Mourne Mountains the entire distance; the road rises in some places more than 100 feet above the sea, from which it is separated by rocky precipices and shelving cliffs, indented with yawning caverns, so terrifically lashed by the tremendous waves as to impart to the coast a character of extraordinary sublimity. From Newcastle, the tourist passes along the Mourne shore, through a singularly wild-featured and sublime landscape—on the left the broad expanse of the Irish Sea; and on the right, a grand Alpine region of cloud-embosomed mountains overhanging the road. Continuing the drive along the coast road from Kilkeel, the car passes Mourne Park; a romantically situated demesne, the seat of the Earl of Kilmorey, and the picturesque hamlet of Killowen, where is the primitive Chapel, the scene of the Yelverton Marriage. The tourist will have time at Rostrevor to ascend Slieve Ban and view the celebrated Cloughmore Stone.

First Class, £2 10s.

Second Class, £2.

CO. DOWN and CO. ANTRIM CIRCULAR TOUR, No. 2.

Combining the County Down Tour No. 1, with extension from Belfast to Portrush and the Giant's Causeway. Programme same as Tour No. 1, with extension to Portrush by rail direct from Belfast and back to Dublin.

First Class, £3 5s.

Second Class, £2 12s. 6d.

COUNTY DOWN and COUNTY ANTRIM COASTS CIRCULAR TOURS, No. 3.

With extension to Portrush and the Giant's Causeway by the famous coast-road through Glenarm, Carnlough, Garron Point, Cushendall, Ballycastle, Carrick-a-Rede, Giant's Causeway, Dunluce Castle, and Portrush.

Extract from Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall's Book on Ireland:—"We have never visited any district which so completely defies description, either with pen or pencil."

Terms for the entire Round, including Rail and Car Fare, with One Day's Hotel Accommodation at Newcastle:—

First Class. £3 14s.

Second Class, £3.

CONNEMARA AND THE WEST OF IRELAND.

Dublin to Galway, Westport, Ballina, or Sligo; or to Sligo, Ballina, or Westport and back from Galway:—

One Passenger, First Class,	40s.	Second Class,	34s. 6d.
Two Passengers	„ 74s.	„	63s. 6d.
Three „	„ 106s.	„	91s. 0d.
Four „	„ 134s.	„	116s. 0d.

CONNEMARA, KILLARNEY, and the SOUTH of IRELAND.

Dublin to Sligo, Ballina, Westport, or Galway; and from Galway, *via* Athenry, to Limerick; thence *via* Limerick Junction, or *via* Patrick's Well and Charleville Junction, or *via* Newcastle and Tralee to Killarney, and returning to Killarney direct to Kingsbridge Station, Dublin:—

One Passenger, First Class,	63s. 0d.	Second Class,	42s. 0d.
Two Passengers,	„ 113s. 6d.	„	75s. 6d.
Three „	„ 160s. 6d.	„	107s. 0d.
Four „	„ 201s. 6d.	„	134s. 6d.

Fares do not include conveyance by road, but the railway fares between Ballina and Westport, and between Galway and Killarney, are included. If the tourist travels by car at his own cost by the coast of Clare, he will be allowed to travel by rail from Foynes to Limerick on his unused coupon.

CIRCULAR TOUR ROUND IRELAND.

Visiting Portarlington, Mallow, Cork, Bandon, Bantry, Glengariff, Killarney ("the drive from Glengariff to Killarney is one of astonishing beauty."—*The late W. M. Thackeray*), Tralee, Limerick, Athenry, Galway, Westport, Ballina, Sligo, Bundoran, Enniskillen, Derry, Portrush (for Giant's Causeway), Belfast, Newcastle (Co. Down), Coast round to Rostrevor and Warrenpoint, Newry, Dundalk, and back to Dublin.

First Class, £6 18s. 6d.	Second Class, £5 10s.
--------------------------	-----------------------

The above Fares do not include conveyance between Galway and Westport, or Ballina and Bundoran.

GRAND BRITISH TOUR, No. 1.

Dublin (North Wall) to Holyhead by express boat, rail to Bangor (Cathedral of 6th Century, Penrhyn Castle, Menai Bridge), Conway (Venerable Castle in splendid preservation), Rhyl (for Rhuddlan Castle, built by Llewellyn 1015, St. Asaph, Ruthin Castle, Ruins of Denbigh Castle, &c.), Chester (Roman City, "the walls grey with the memory of two thousand years"), Wigan, Preston, Lancaster, Kendal, Windermere, coach to Ambleside, Rydal, Grasmere, Thirlmere, Keswick, thence by rail to Troutbeck, Penrith, Carlisle, Lockerbie (for Dumfries), Carstairs, Lanark (Falls of the Clyde), Edinburgh, Stirling, Bridge of Allan, Dunblane, Callander, coach through the Trossachs, steamer on Loch Katrine, coach to Inversnaid, steamer on Loch Lomond to Balloch, rail to Glasgow, steamer to Dublin.

First Class throughout	„ „ „ „	£5 10s.
Second Class and Saloon of Steamers	„ „	£4 10s.
Third Class as far as Edinburgh, Second beyond, and Saloon of Steamer, Glasgow to Dublin	„	£3 9s.

CARSON BROTHERS,
GAZE'S UNIVERSAL TICKET OFFICE.
7 GRAFTON-STREET 7

All Letters of Inquiry must be accompanied by a Stamped Envelope.

GRAND BRITISH TOUR, No. 2.

Dublin (North Wall) to Edinburgh by above route, rail to Stirling, Bridge of Allan, Dunblane, Perth, Dunkeld, Pitlochry, Blair Athole, Inverness, thence by steamer on Caledonian Canal, calling at Falls of Foyers, Fort Augustus, Banavie, Fort William Ballachulish (for Glencoe), Oban, Crinan Canal, Kyles of Bute to Greenock, thence by steamer to Dublin.

First Class throughout	£7 7s.
Second Class and Saloon of Steamer	£6 3s.
Third Class as far as Edinburgh, Second beyond, and Saloon of Steamer, Glasgow to Dublin	£5 1s.

GRAND BRITISH TOUR (including the North of Ireland), No. 3.

Dublin (North Wall) to Edinburgh by above route, Stirling, Bridge of Allan, Dunblane, Callander, coach through the Trossachs, steamer on Loch Katrine, coach to Inversnaid, steamer on Loch Lomond to Balloch, rail to Glasgow, Greenock, mail steamer to Belfast, rail to Larne, thence by car along the coast road *via* Glenarm, Carnlough, Garven Point, Cushendall, Ballycastle, Carrick-a-Rede, Giant's Causeway, Dunluce Castle to Portrush, by rail to Belfast, then by rail to Newcastle (County Down). By car the tourist passes along the Mourne Shore, through a singularly wild-featured and sublime landscape, on the left the broad expanse of the Irish Sea, on the right a grand Alpine region of close-embosomed mountains overhanging the road to Carlingford Lough, Rostrevor, and Warrenpoint, rail to Dublin.

First Class throughout	£7 14s. 6d.
Second Class and Saloon of Steamer	£6 7s. 0d.
Third Class to Edinburgh and Second and Saloon of Steamer, Greenock Belfast	£5 4s. 0d.

Special Round of Tours for American Clients.

The following round of travel has been specially prepared for our American clients, commencing from Dublin and terminating in London (tickets for all parts of the Continent of Europe can also be supplied by our Dublin Office in continuation of the tour) :—

Dublin, rail to Dundalk, Belfast, Portrush (for Giant's Causeway), back to Belfast, then by Burns' Mail Steamer to Greenock, rail to Glasgow, Balloch, steamer on Loch Lomond to Inversnaid, coach to Stronachlachar, steamer on Loch Katrine, coach through the Trossachs to Callander, rail to Dunblane, Bridge of Allan, Stirling, Edinburgh, Carstairs (for Lanark and Falls of the Clyde), Lockerbie (for Dumfries), Carlisle, Penrith (for Keswick and the Lake District), Lancaster, Preston, Wigan, Crewe, Stafford, Birmingham, Kenilworth, Leamington (for Stratford-on-Avon) Rugby, Bletchley (for Oxford or Cambridge), to London.

First Class throughout	£6 14s. 0d.
Second Class and Saloon of Steamer	£5 7s. 6d.
Second Class Saloon of Steamer on Outward Journey, and Third Class Edinburgh to London,		£4 15s. 6d.

CARSON BROTHERS,
GAZE'S UNIVERSAL TICKET OFFICE,
7 GRAFTON-STREET 7

All Letters of Inquiry must be accompanied by a Stamped Envelope.

Just Published, New Edition, revised and enlarged, price 3s. 6d.,

THE MODERN ELOCUTIONIST,

DEDICATED BY SPECIAL PERMISSION TO

HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH,

COMPILED AND EDITED BY

JOHN A. JENNINGS, B.A., T.C.D.

A Selection from Opinions of the Press.

"Lovers of reading and recitations, whether for purposes of education or of entertainment, will find in *THE MODERN ELOCUTIONIST* a volume much to be commended for good arrangement, and still more for a copious selection of comparatively un-hackneyed pieces."—*The Graphic*.

"It is an admirable compilation."—*The Hornet*.

"The collection does the editor credit, and the book will be found very useful to the student of elocution."—*The Era*.

"This is one of the best selections of pieces for reading and recitation we have seen. The compiler evidently knows what is suited for platform delivery and what is not, and he has chosen just those which are sure to go well with almost any audience. Another merit of the work is that the selections are, as a whole, much less worn and familiar than usual. Anyone who is in the habit of taking part in penny readings and similar entertainments will find this volume very useful."—*The Rock*.

"Chosen with scholarly taste and discrimination."—*The Daily Express*.

"Taken from the school-literature point of view, or looked at as a culling of beautiful poems made by a loving hand, we regard *THE MODERN ELOCUTIONIST* secure of success."—*The Freeman's Journal*.

"We confidently bespeak for *THE MODERN ELOCUTIONIST* a wide and permanent circulation in schools, as well as in the libraries of all those who desire a selection of extracts expressing humour, pathos, and the deeper emotions of the human heart."—*The Irish Times*.

"An excellent book for use in schools, and one likely also to prove most agreeable in those family circles where a taste for good reading is cultivated."—*The Dublin Mail*.

"We commend this work as a really useful addition to the parish library; while in the school and at home it will prove a never-failing source of pleasant and instructive reading."—*Irish Ecclesiastical Gazette*.

"A capital text-book, neatly printed and strongly bound, while it has a carefully prepared double index."—*Edinburgh Courant*.

"The selections have been made with a singularly fine taste."—*Edinburgh Daily Review*.

"The book will fulfil not only its highest use in respect to the interest and instruction it will carry with it to the class-room, but as a volume the contents will equally please and amuse."—*New York British Daily Mail*.

"Mr. Jennings' collection is highly satisfactory."—*Westminster Press-Letter*.

"We hail with pleasure this well-timed effort of Mr. Jennings, and cordially recommend the work."—*Carlisle Constitution*.

"A work which will be welcomed alike by teacher and pupil."—*Leeds Mercury*.

"Among many books of a similar character, this volume is entitled to a high place, and if carefully studied will do much to help many a young man to read and speak well."—*The Liverpool Mercury*.

"We can cordially recommend it to Canadian students."—*The Montreal Gazette*.

"The task was obviously difficult; but it has been admirably fulfilled."—*Toronto Mail*.

DUBLIN: CARSON BROTHERS, GRAFTON-ST.

LONDON: SIMPKIN & CO.; HAMILTON, ADAMS, & CO.

